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The Week-end Review

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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . Page 653
FEAR IN EASTERN EUROPE 656
A LETTER AND THE REPLIES. By Editor . . . 657
"A FREE, STRONG AND HAPPY FRANCE." By Alexander Werth 658
A LONDON DIARY 659
THIS ENGLAND 660
EVADERS ALL. By Y. Y. 661
CORRESPONDENCE 662
From D. W. Brogan; Jonathan Griffin; Eleanor Rathbone, M.P.; G. P. Gooch and Others; Col. Maurice Spencer; W. J. Wenham; Barbara Nixon; J. H. Sutcliffe; J. Rosen; Col. L'Estrange Malone; C. B. Purdom; A. K. Hamilton Jenkin; A Working Woman of Westminster; C. E. Vulliamy.
"FALSTAFF" AND "DIE MEISTERSINGER." By W. J. Turner 665
"PARNELL" AND THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN. By Ivor Brown. . . . . Page 666
PLAYS AND PICTURES 667
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By David Garnett . . . 669
REVIEWS:
New Novels. By Peter Quennell 670
The Mad Monarch. By A. Desmond Hawkins . 671
Is Roosevelt a Jeffersonian? By Michael Foot . 671
Old Nick. By Frederick Laws 672
More of Me. By Philip Jordan 674
The Beginnings of Kenya. By W. M. Macmillan 674
"A Phenomenon Which One Slays or is Slain By . . ." 676
SHORTER NOTICES 676
GRAMOPHONE NOTES. By Edward Sackville West . 678
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 680
CROSSWORD 682
THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Toreador . . . 684

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

EVERYONE fears Germany's next move but no one knows what it will be. The promised negotiations are still delayed, the proposed questions to Hitler may or may not lead to a clear understanding. Meanwhile the tension over a large part of Europe is intolerable. In such conditions every movement of troops is interpreted as the possible beginning of a world war. We do not ourselves believe that war is immediately imminent, because Hitler is not ready. This week's alarm on the Austrian frontier seems to have been exaggerated. But war is inevitable before long if nothing is done to stop the present drift towards anarchy. The one contribution that Great Britain can make to peace is to render her own position unambiguous. That is the contribution that the Baldwin Government has so far shown no disposition to offer.

King Fuad

The death of King Fuad may help the popular cause in the triangular duel between Turks, fellahs, and the British which has made the history of Egypt for half a century. He came of an able family and was himself a man of parts with a keen interest in several branches of science. But he was grossly selfish and grasping, developed in later life all the meaner tricks of the Oriental autocrat, and save by his encouragement of science showed no vestige of concern for the welfare of his people. He exacted from them an annual income of over £600,000 and in addition drew great revenues from the public lands. He was in all this the typical head of the "Turkish" landed aristocracy, descendants of the Mamelukes and the Circassian and Albanian mercenaries, who bleed the peasantry, and reduce the tillers of the richest soil on this earth, where every field yields three main crops a year, to a sub-human poverty. British tactics from Lord Cromer's day onwards have usually been to lean on the Turks and repress the nationalist fellah masses, alternately checking and using the King (or as he used to be called, the Khedive). Fuad was usually in favour, while the Wafd, the popular lower-middle class party, was always suspect. He was allowed, and perhaps encouraged, to destroy the Constitution, and managed partly by repression, partly by adroit corruption to rule as a virtual autocrat in his latter years. But in the last phase he went too far, and saw himself compelled to restore democracy, with the probability that the dreaded Wafd will come into power after next month's elections. It remains to be seen whether the triangular tactics will work under a Regency.

The Guardian Angel

The appointment of General Göring to a new post as economic controller of the Reich with seniority over

Dr. Schacht has prompted many guesses. The General's qualifications include a complete ignorance of economics. It seems that Dr. Schacht himself suggested this appointment, and hopes to shelter under the wing of this portly guardian angel. The attacks upon him of the more radical wing of the Nazi Party, which used the official press freely for this purpose, had become unbearable. Worse still, Dr. Schacht, who is not a meek personality, was at constant feud with some of the heads of the departments of which he was general dictator. The main issue was the devaluation of the mark, which the "radical" Nazis wish to bring about. They also pressed continually for still further interference with big business. General Göring is to be classified as a Conservative Nazi. His role will be merely that of a co-ordinator: in other words he possesses the requisite brutality to deal with troublesome party-comrades. The inference is that the Führer, for the time being, aims at respectability in finance and at as near an approach to solvency as the imperious demands of rearmament allow. Dr. Schacht's immediate aim is still the raising of a loan in London.

The Palestine Riots

The recent riots in Palestine are the most serious since 1933, and it is by no means certain that they are yet over. The trouble began with an attack on some Jews by Arab bandits; retaliations followed and several Jews and Arabs were killed and injured. Last week feeling ran particularly high in Jaffa and Tel Aviv, and a general outbreak seemed possible at any moment. Four thousand Jews had to be evacuated from Jaffa, whilst a smaller number of Arabs were forced to leave Tel Aviv. Conditions became more normal at the week-end, although the burning of crops and buildings continues, and there are signs of disturbance in other parts of the country. The next move lies with the Arab leaders. Some urge the calling off of the general strike and the departure of an Arab delegation to London. Others favour the continuation of the strike until the Government agrees to stop Jewish immigration, to prohibit the sale of land to Jews and to form a national government responsible to a Representative Council. None of these demands, of course, are compatible with the Mandate. The High Commissioner enjoys an exceptional popularity both with Jews and Arabs. His task is extraordinarily difficult, for no "removal of Arab grievances" will meet the case. He has violent nationalism to deal with. The Arabs wish to dominate the Jews or get rid of them, and we are pledged to defend them. And Mussolini is doing all he can to foment the Arab world against Britain.

The Road Fund

In general the principle of earmarking tax revenues for particular services is not desirable. But the Road Fund occupies a special position, in that the taxes on motorists have always been justified on the ground that the proceeds—apart from a limited deduction for general Treasury purposes—would be used to finance road expenditure. In abolishing the Fund, Mr. Chamberlain argues that it will have no adverse effect, because Parliament will always be able to provide as much money as it thinks fit for road maintenance and improvement. But this argument is either disingenuous, or very foolish. The existence of the Road Fund has been—despite the raids of successive Chancellors upon it—some guarantee that road expenditure would be kept up year by year to some extent independently of the general budgetary position. Now that the Fund is no more, roads will have to take their chance with other forms of expenditure, and activity in road-making will pass more completely under the control of the Chancellor and the Treasury officials. Road-making being a very important aspect of Public Works, this means that public works policy will be less likely than before to follow the rational course of intensified activity during periods of economic depression; at such times Chancellors, hard up for revenue, will be least likely to provide adequate sums for road development. Accordingly, the abolition of the Road Fund is not only a breach of faith, but also economically unsound. The part of Mr. Chamberlain's defence that will be longest remembered is his argument that the more we spend on the roads the more road accidents there are. By the same token, if motor cars had never been invented, they would never have knocked anyone down. It happens, however, that both roads and motors exist: the problem is to make enough of the one to enable the other to be used more safely.

Women Diplomatists

After refusing equality of payment to women civil servants, the Baldwin administration has now decided on principle against the admission of women to the diplomatic and consular services. The ground on which it has chosen to take its stand is that while our nation is sufficiently enlightened to approve of such appointments, others would misunderstand. We should not ourselves suggest the sending of women to serve in this capacity in Nazi Germany, Afghanistan or Italy. The status of women is one of the tests of a country's civilisation. But the National Government is wholly mistaken in supposing that the rank it allows to them is uniquely high. In the Soviet Union, the United States and Scandinavia such appointments would seem welcome and natural. To our mind this career seems particularly well-suited to a gifted woman: not many would seek it, but to bar the door to them is to linger in the nineteenth century. One notes with relative satisfaction that four of the eight members who sat on the Foreign Office Committee in 1934 approved the admission of women to the diplomatic service.

The Civil List

In Victorian days, until about fifty years ago, Republicans and Radicals used to make regular protest against the exorbitant costs of monarchy. In these days, we have grown so used to millions, and even milliards, that the protests have lost their sting. "The King costs half a million pounds a year," proclaimed a Republican poet. But in these days a mere half-million seems neither here nor there. If monarchy is a useful institution, it is not very dear at under £450,000 a year, especially as a part of this sum will remain undrawn as long as the King is unmarried. Indeed, the Civil List, as it now stands, shows a large saving in comparison with that of the late King; and some saving remains even after allotting the handsome retiring pension of £70,000 a year to the Queen Dowager. To-day no republican propagandist can hope to cut much ice by advocating the advantages of republican economy—even if he points the moral by urging that even £400,000 or so would come in very handy if it were distributed in South Wales. The Republican to-day must base his case on psychological, political and social grounds, not on allegations that monarchy is a burden on the national budget. As for the argument that it would be better for Kings, if we are to keep them, to dispense with courts and ceremonies, and live quietly in, say, Golders Green like ordinary Civil Servants—no one holds with it. Most people want a King and prefer that he should dress the part; and there is still the immense social weight of snobbery behind the desire to maintain the trappings of the Throne. Monarchy to-day gets the best of both worlds. The Royal Family is good bourgeois; and this endears it to the people. But it also remains royal and impressive; and this suits both the upper classes and that part of most of us that likes a good show.

New Zealand Marketing Bill

Mr. Savage's Labour Government in New Zealand has followed up its measure for the nationalisation of the central bank with an ambitious scheme for the control of dairy produce and eventually of other agricultural products as well. Under the Bill which is now before Parliament, the State will become the owner and exporter of dairy produce, the farmer will receive a guaranteed price, and the home as well as the export market will pass under Government control. The prices to be paid to the farmers by the State marketing department are to be fixed in the first instance on the basis of average prices over the past eight or ten years, and thereafter in the light of producing and selling costs, the living standards of the producers, and the necessity of "procuring the stability and efficiency of the dairying industry." This looks like a plan to secure to the farmers something like a stable price for their products in terms of New Zealand currency. We cannot judge this Bill adequately until we have a more detailed knowledge of its provisions. But it appears to be the most ambitious attempt yet made at State export trading outside Russia.

Prison Reform

Twenty-five years of reform in the law and prison administration have produced substantial results, which are summarised in the Prison Commissioner's Report for 1934. Since 1910 the average daily prison population has been almost halved, and the number of "receptions" at British prisons has been reduced from 186,395 to 56,425. Committals for drunkenness have fallen by 48,000, whilst the probation system has been widely extended. The Criminal Justice Act of 1914, which required time to be given for the payment of fines, has led to a reduction of more than 70,000 in committals for non-payment, and a similar Act passed last year will further reduce this class of prisoner. This reduction in the number of prisoners has been accompanied by better treatment in the prison itself. The abolition of separate confinement, the limited permission to talk in prison, the tendency to rely rather on rewards for good behaviour than on punishments for insubordination, the introduction of lectures, concerts and greater facilities for education and the efforts to classify prisoners and provide more interesting work have all done something to humanise prison life. Prison to-day is not as certain to brutalise the prisoner and make him unemployable as it used to be. According to the report 82 per cent. of 22,000 first offenders released in 1932, have not committed a further offence.

The Staff of the B.B.C.

The principle for which Sir Stafford Cripps contended in his remarkable speech in the House of Commons debate on the Ullswater Commission is of great importance, and would remain important even if Sir John Reith were able to meet all Sir Stafford's allegations about arbitrary interference with the lives of individual members of his staff. The Ullswater Committee recommended the formation of some kind of staff organisation. The Governors of the B.B.C. replied to the suggestion as if it were an insult. Since then a vote has been taken inside the B.B.C. and the staff has polled heavily against any form of Trade Union. But no one takes the poll very seriously. Conditions for most of the employees are excellent; the administrative staff has reasonable security, good pay and good holidays. In these circumstances a meeting of, say, three hundred typists with no particular grievances and no leadership is not likely to vote for a staff organisation, especially when it knows that its employers, represented at the meeting, are opposed to it. It is not enough for the B.B.C. to reply that there is general contentment and, therefore, no need of an association. Without an organisation the individual is helpless, and the public is left to form an opinion about the rights and wrongs of such a case as that of Mr. R. S. Lambert of the *Listener* without the guidance of any organisation authorised to state his case. Benevolence has never been considered an adequate defence of despotism, either in private or public institutions.

A Slum Exhibition

The A.T.O. (Architects' and Technicians' Organisation) have arranged at 13, Suffolk Street an exhibition to illustrate the causes and effects of bad working-class housing in this country. By diagrams, photographs and clearly-displayed figures it hammers home a number of hideous facts. Thus there are 7,000,000 persons in England and Wales living in over-crowded conditions—that is more than three persons to two rooms; of the dwellings built in the last four years only 13 per cent. are available at a rent within the reach of most working-class families; the mortality per thousand from tuberculosis and pneumonia is twice as high in over-crowded Shoreditch as in decent Hampstead; on the other hand, the higher rents resulting from slum clearance aggravate mortality from under-nourishment; working-class houses are falling into decay more quickly than they are being built; at the same time there are over a quarter of a million men in the building trade unemployed.

NEXT WEEK'S LITERARY SUPPLEMENT
to the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will include an article by Elizabeth Bowen on the Royal Academy, a short story by V. S. Pritchett, and a poem by Robert Nichols. Contributors include Aldous Huxley, H. N. Brailsford, Eileen Power, J. H. Driberg, Edward Sackville West, Barrington Gates, C. E. M. Joad, Cyril Connolly, H. E. Bates, G. D. H. Cole and others.

FEAR IN EASTERN EUROPE

ABOUT a fortnight ago Czech newspapers reported that German lorries loaded with ammunition to help a Nazi putsch in Austria had only been prevented from crossing the Czech frontier by prompt action of the Czech Government. This week the Austrians are concentrating their illegally enlarged forces on the Bavarian frontier, while twelve German "sharp-shooter" battalions engage in "high Alpine exercises" in the Bavarian Alps. Whether Hitler really thinks the time ripe to encourage another coup in Austria no one can be sure. What we do know is that with the League discredited Europe lives in panic; that Great Britain's non-committal attitude has everywhere encouraged the belief that Hitler has nothing to fear from us if he strikes in the East; that the shortsightedness of the Quai d'Orsay which has preferred the alliance of a preoccupied and bankrupt Italy to the unity of even a weakened League of Nations has nearly completed a process of disintegration which began with the League's failure over Manchuria. As this disintegration increases every small nation which has so far put its trust in the democratic powers of the League is forced to weigh the pros and cons of a bargain with the possible aggressor. We are, in fact, fast drifting back to pre-war politics, back to the old rivalries for spheres of influence and the balance of power in the Balkans, back to the days which we swore never to see again when there are no longer questions of justice but only questions of relative military power and strategic position.

In 1914 the storm began in the Balkans. The next war is quite likely to begin there too. In 1934 the League Powers left it to Mussolini to protect the "independence" of Austria from the Nazi putsch, which ended with the murder of Dollfuss. Since then Austria has been dominated by the Italian-subsidised Heimwehr which had shot down and outlawed the Vienna Socialists, the one section in Austria which certainly would have been the bulwark against the Nazis. To-day Mussolini has weakened his influence in Europe by making war in Africa. With no alternative solution offered them by the League Powers—unless the visits of Prince Otto are to be considered as offering an alternative—it is little wonder if many loyal Austrians, who hate Fascism but know themselves to be Germans, regard a Nazi Austria as inevitable. Dr. Schuschnigg, it is true, has recently made efforts to free himself. He has sought an understanding with the Little Entente and has tried to make his Cabinet more popular by introducing two "liberal" members into his government, and friendly gestures have even been made to the Trade Unions. His announcement that conscription would be at once put into force was a move not only against Hitler but also against Starhemberg, whose private army will now be overshadowed by a regular army under Government control. Prince Starhemberg has replied by a fighting speech in which he said that the Heimwehr would only be disbanded over his dead body. (The obstacle might not be found insurmountable.) But the increased internal struggle may well seem to create a favourable opportunity for a new German attempt on Austria.

English people who regard this result with a detached benignity are perhaps not aware of all that is involved. Even if we prefer not to think of the fate of Jewish Vienna under Nazi rule, we cannot altogether forget that Czechoslovakia's position with Austria as part of Germany. In Czechoslovakia there are about three and a half million South Germans the vast majority of whom are now German nationalists. They represent something like a quarter of the total population of Czechoslovakia. To the north are the Poles who are by no means completely within the German orbit but who nourish an historic though not very intelligible grudge against Czechoslovakia. Nor are the Hungarians to the South of Slovakia pleasant neighbours for Dr. Benes to contemplate. Hungarian policy is similar to Polish in that the Hungarians fear the Germans but might perhaps be bought by Hitler if the price is good enough. Report says that General Gömbös has already made a bargain with Hitler: Germany is to have Austria and the Czech part of Czechoslovakia while the two million Slovaks are to go to Hungary. But it would be unwise to accept this bargain as settled. General Gömbös has just fought a duel with the Opposition leader, Tiber von Eckhardt, because the latter accused him of trading the "trusty Italian friendship" for a dubious Nazi association. All Hungarians are patriots and aware of their history; they have not forgotten 1848 and the great passive resistance struggle against the Teuton which did not end until 1867. The discovery of Nazi maps which show Budapest as part of the Third Reich have told against Hitler in Hungary. But it would be unwise to take too much comfort from Hungarian objections to German expansion. A Hungarian ruler could not openly announce a bargain with Hitler, but a sufficient hope of regaining lost Magyar territory—which means the estates of landlords whose serfs are now far better off as peasants under Czech rule—might tempt Hungary into a very benevolent attitude to a German putsch.

Well, says the ordinary Englishman, is all this my business? Must I run risks for the sake of Czechoslovakia? The answer is that unfortunately the risks exist, anyhow. For the Czechs will fight if their existence is at stake, and they will have allies. The Little Entente still holds together, though German propaganda has made headway in Jugoslavia and Titulescu has to struggle to maintain his position against a pro-Nazi Rumanian Fascist movement. France can scarcely let Czechoslovakia disappear without a struggle, and no one knows at what point Russia would think intervention necessary. M. Benes has a close understanding with the U.S.S.R., and the Rumanians have agreed to allow Russia to cross the strip of territory that divides Czechoslovakia from Russia in the event of an unprovoked attack on Czechoslovakian soil.

If this—or another war—does not break out shortly on the German frontier, it will probably be because Hitler is *sure* he would find all the League Powers, including Great Britain, against him. It may be argued that any such calculation is precarious, that collective security is now dead and that it is better for Great Britain to concentrate on trying to keep out. If that is to be British policy, let us say so clearly and follow Japan and Germany out of the League. Other Powers will then make their own arrangements with the certainty that we do not count. But let us not repeat in Europe the story of Abyssinia. The one indubitably dishonourable and fatal course is for us to retain obligations we do not intend to fulfill.

A LETTER AND THE REPLIES

Early in this year I sent a circular letter to a selection of about 2,500 of our home postal subscribers. It is always difficult for an Editor to keep in close touch with his readers in spite of a large post-bag, and I thought it would be particularly interesting at a time when our sales are rising rapidly to find out what a group of regular readers were thinking about the paper. The letter asked them for criticisms and suggestions. A short questionnaire was enclosed asking whether the competition features were to their liking and whether other types of competition would be better appreciated.

Seven to eight hundred people replied—a very high proportion of response. The letters came from Conservatives, from Liberals and from supporters of Labour; from people with no interest in politics to people who thought all competitions a waste of time and space which ought to be devoted solely to changing the world as fast as possible. To this last group I can offer no better reply than to quote the subscriber who first bought the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION only for Caliban's problems and now has no time to look at Caliban because he has to read all the rest of the paper. But men do not live by politics alone. The large majority of readers enjoy the competitions when they have finished quarrelling with our views about Socialism or peace. Most of them dislike part of the paper; as it is meant to stimulate thinking criticisms are themselves compliments. Each stink bomb is a bouquet. Many of them seem to read the paper from the first word to the last, even noticing, in several cases, that the small advertisements about cockroaches and Unitarians, which had long been printed next to each, have now been separated. There is no regular writer in the paper who is not vigorously attacked in one letter or defended with equal vigour in other letters. Only one enthusiast went so far as to say that "it is a perfect paper and I ask for no alteration." But others described it (perhaps a little embarrassingly) as a "fountain of living water" and "a light in darkness." I liked particularly the subscriber who said that he detested every individual item, but that it was "nevertheless incomparably the best paper produced." In most of the homes to which the paper goes, it is apparently passed round to all members of the family, then sent on to other people and finally at third or fourth hand, sent abroad to readers in the Dominions or colonies. If I am to judge from this correspondence at least 100,000 people read THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION every week.

First let me summarise the results of the questionnaire about competitions. There was a large majority in favour of the literary competition. It is enjoyed by innumerable readers who never dream of entering for the prizes. Nor was there considerable demand for changing the unique and delightful Caliban. Thumbs were down on chess or bridge or acrostics, but there was a large vote in favour of sometimes getting Caliban to vary his mathematical monstrosities with an examination in general knowledge. I expect Caliban will agree. How clever people are! Personally if I had to be hanged in default of solving Caliban, I should walk on to the scaffold without waste of time. But here is a reader who says that "Caliban's efforts are for children." Others, like me, declare that he is far above their heads. But more than a third of the people who replied to the questionnaire were his enthusiastic supporters. Mr. Leslie-Smith's Crossword evoked a similar reaction. He had an even larger number of supporters and the general verdict was that he reaches about the right degree of insolubility. He was compared favourably with Torquemada and with the famous *Times* crossword. A typical letter said that the crossword was too difficult, "but Heaven forbid that you should make it easier—I go on trying." Finally, some suggestions were made about varying the prizes given and these will probably be carried into effect.

Next a comment on novel-reviewing. A librarian wanted more "Shorter Notices"; some critics thought a lot of books reviewed were not worth mentioning. One correspondent rather surprisingly said that some of our reviews were "mealy-mouthed." Another, by an interesting coincidence, used the same word in praise, saying that he liked them because they were "*not* mealy-mouthed." In brief, about novel-reviewing I should say this. We all know that among the enormous bulk of novels published every year only a handful are, in fact, "masterpieces" to be compared seriously with the works of Dostoevsky or even of Trollope. Readers do not believe that so many novels are serious works of art even when reviewers tell them so. But they want to read novels all the same. They want to make up their library lists and they look to their week's paper for guidance about which novels will amuse them for an hour or two. They have the right to expect that a journal like this will review seriously the few novels that are worth considering on their literary merits, but they also expect us to tell them which other novels of the week are of a type which will interest them. The ideal novel reviewer picks out such good novels as there are and by brief remarks about others indicates what kind of novels they are and whether they are good or bad examples of it. On the whole these letters suggest that our present novel reviewers do this with some success; they are at any rate not accused of that indiscriminate praise which exasperates so many newspaper readers. They do not discover every week new geniuses of whom nobody ever hears again but they have discovered several first-class writers who have been largely missed elsewhere and who have made their names since.

I now come to the most popular single feature in the paper—*This England*. Most readers regard it I think as a sort of *hors d'oeuvre*. They look at it first, confident that they will then be in a humour, as one appreciative writer put it, for "knowing the worst" which, he thought you could always be sure of doing by reading THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. One reader writes that she "disapproves of *This England* but always reads it." I have also been asked on what principle *This England* is constructed. Definition is difficult, but in general the object is to illustrate the mind of England by examples from the contemporary press. That can only be done, as doctors who have studied the human mind know, by examination of the abnormal developments of the normal. Jingoism, snobbery, the advertiser's self-adulation, the habit of observing the mote in another's eye while missing the beam in one's own, the steadfast refusal to notice awkward facts, the dislike for hard thinking—all these in some degree or other are common Anglo-Saxon attitudes. *This England* gives examples of them in their cruder forms. They need not necessarily be funny, but they will usually be exaggerations of the typical. Their essential quality is to be unconscious revelations. Other people's jokes are not admissible—though sometimes we have been stupid and got caught by an extract sent without its context.

Finally, something must be said both in gratitude and in reply to criticism of a more general character. One critic says that we are "too fair to Labour," another protests against the "Liberal attitude" of our Comments and Leaders, a third complains that "we hate everyone" and a fourth heals the wound by saying that our comments are "as near as possible an impartial view of home and foreign affairs." In another family the paper "rouses great wrath and is read all through." One admirer says he looks upon the paper "with admiration and awe. Your politics and those of 90 per cent. of your contributors are so very advanced, so very bloodthirsty, that I read it all from cover to cover." A number of writers speak of our "sane and judicial articles," thank us for "our sanity and good taste" and so on and so forth. I have found in discussion that this question of bias is usually an unconscious cover for agreement or disagreement; there is a strong human tendency to say that the opinions one agrees with are impartial and to be sure that one's opponents' are biased. The point arose interestingly enough over the occasion of the death of George V. One writer was outraged because Critic ventured in the London Diary to raise a small voice of protest against the excessive adulation of royalty and the solemn pomposity of the B.B.C. during the period of the King's illness and funeral. Several other readers were horrified that the paper so far fell into line in its attitude to the Royal Family. We ought, they said, to have protested far more violently against the deification of the late King. They feared that increase of sales would make us think more of " good form," that the paper would become less outspoken and more anxious to conciliate readers. On all this I have now only one thing to say. A paper can be candid, but it cannot be impartial. It exists to express an attitude to life and a point of view. It will not do so successfully nor honestly, if it does not try to meet the arguments of the other side, or if it suppresses the opinions of people who differ. It is no good unless it argues its own case with all possible vigour; it can never succeed in being completely fair to everyone. In any case a newspaper is a bucket into which a constant stream of hotly critical letters is emptied. Only a few can achieve publication. But all complaints are submissively received even when they are neither printed nor acted upon. EDITOR

"A FREE, STRONG AND HAPPY FRANCE"

THE French election was held in circumstances of particular gravity. Many a French voter, in dropping his envelope into the ballot box, must have given an anxious thought to the future of Europe and the future of France. Four years in the " dynamic " world of Hitler and Mussolini are an infinitely long time—what will the next four years bring?

It has been observed that this general election was not fought, like the last British election, on any clear issue. It was, roughly, the battle between two sets of ideas, between two *états d'esprit* —one Right, the other Left. The whole country was haunted by the growing danger of war—and this undercurrent of anxiety, common to all, had a curiously moderating effect on the election campaign. Add to this that, on the question of foreign policy, everybody—on Right and Left alike—was a little sceptical not only about his opponent's " solutions," but also about his own. The Right cannot have sincerely believed that " a strong and respected France " or an alliance with a bankrupt Italy could prevent war. And when the Left spoke of collective security, a strong League of Nations, and close co-operation with England, were they sure that it would all work? For one thing, few Left Wing candidates ventured to advocate a strong League policy against Italy, and many complained bitterly of the " ungracious " attitude of England towards the Locarno coup. " No doubt," they would add, " it was Laval's fault, but—." But actually they could hardly persuade themselves to put Abyssinia and the Rhine in the same category. I was present at one of M. Herriot's recent meetings at which one of the hecklers asked whether France would allow the Abyssinians, " whose country is a member of the League," to be exterminated like vermin with poison gas. M. Herriot looked rather puzzled and waited, as though preparing an answer. At this point another heckler intervened to ask M. Herriot what he thought of the railway deficit. With a sigh of relief, M. Herriot made a long speech on railway organisation. The question on Abyssinia remained unanswered.

Nor would it be true to say that the election was fought on a clear financial issue. The country is undoubtedly in serious financial difficulties, in spite of the cheering reflections on the subject by M. Régnier, the Minister of Finance, who showed the other day that, for the first time in five years, the monthly revenue returns had exceeded the estimates, and who drew generous conclusions from that fact. Actually, the Budget is by no means balanced, if one takes account of the six milliards of " extra-budgeting " expenditure this year, and of some other " exceptional " expenditure. Still, the Right claim that if the deflationist policy of the Laval Government is maintained, the franc will remain intact. With only rare exceptions, the Left also claim to be defenders of the franc, and although they largely attribute the economic crisis to the policy of deflation pursued in the last four years, they are so afraid of upsetting the franc that it is not quite certain that they will abolish the economy decrees of the Laval Government if they come into power.

The campaign of the Left has been less directed against the economy decree than against the Bank of France and the " 200 families." These " 200 families " have been something of a battle-cry in this election campaign—a battle-cry which has undoubtedly caught on—and if there is anything like a coherent Left Wing government in the next Chamber, there is no doubt that something will be done about the Regency Council of the Bank, and its 200 big shareholders, with their stranglehold on the Treasury—as a result of which they are only too often in a position to bring pressure to bear on the Government. Whether the rest of the Front Populaire programme will be carried out will also largely depend on whether the Left parties are able to form a coherent government. With the exception of one or two minor economic clauses, there is nothing in this programme that cannot be immediately applied; though the Right and the " 200 families " will, naturally, put up a fierce fight against most of its points—not least of all against the proposal compelling all newspapers to publish all the sources of their revenue. One would learn some odd and amusing things if this could be carried out. No less effective than their denunciation of the " 200 families " and of the Bank of France has been the campaign of the Left against the armament firms (whose nationalisation figures in the Front Populaire programme).

The " Fascist menace " has not held a very prominent place in the election propaganda of the Left, except that " Fascism " was always identified with " war "; and in the famous Communist poster: " Contre Çà," showing an insane and alcoholic-looking Hitler clutching a knife between his teeth, the handle of the knife is decorated with the emblems of the Croix de Feu and the *Action Française*. The blood-stained blade is made of steel " guaranteed by De Wendel, Krupp and Co."

The Right in their propaganda could think of nothing better than to raise civil war scares by pointing to the " example " of Spain. The *Canard Enchaîné* published in this connection a letter from Azaña to Sarraut advising him to hold the election a week earlier, " as we haven't enough churches left to burn down for the benefit of the *Matin*."

I must also mention a particularly unfortunate piece of Right Wing propaganda: the *Journal* " plebiscite." The question asked was: " Who are the four French statesmen in whom you have the greatest confidence?" A few days later, the paper published " the result of the first 55,000 replies." The results were: Laval 25,900, Tardieu 23,055, Mandel 12,870, and Flandin 6,230. But the *Canard Enchaîné* had the bright idea of adding up the figures, and the total came not to 55,000, but to 68,055. So in its article, entitled " Going one better than Hitler " the *Canard* asked who of the four statesmen had been given the extra 13,055 votes? The *Journal* thereupon replied that the *Canard* had " spoken too soon "; the readers had been asked to give *four* names, and not *one* name. The *Canard* was triumphant. " If so," it said, " there should have been 220,000 votes in the 55,000 replies, and the *Journal* has published only 68,055. What did it do with the remaining 151,945 votes?" Since then we have heard no more about the Laval-Tardieu plebiscite.

So much for the campaign. On Sunday the first round was held. Owing to the large number of candidates (even apart from the " freak " candidates) a deputy was returned in only 183 out of 618 constituencies. In all the other constituencies where no single candidate received an absolute majority a second ballot will be held next Sunday. It is then that the Front Populaire pact will come to the test. Under this pact the Left Wing candidates are expected to withdraw in favour of the one with the largest Left Wing poll, so that the bulk of the Left Wing votes may go to the remaining Radical, Socialist, Union Socialiste, or Communist candidate, as the case may be (at least in those constituencies where the seat is in danger of being captured by the Right).

The results of the first ballot show that the Communists have advanced nearly all along the line. In 1932 the Communists obtained 790,000 votes (300,000 less than in 1928); now they have obtained nearly 1,500,000 votes. Owing to particularly unfavourable polling conditions they received only ten seats at the Chamber with their 790,000 votes (under P.R. they would have had fifty); now (if the Front Populaire pact is more or less observed) they should have between forty and fifty seats. (Under P.R. they would have nearly 100; but even forty, after ten, is an enormous advance). The total Left Wing poll on Sunday was, in round figures, as follows:

Communists	1,500,000
Socialists	1,950,000
Other Left Wing parties	550,000
Radicals	1,450,000
	5,450,000

or well over half the voters. In 1932 the corresponding figures were 790,000, 1,960,000, 515,000 and 1,836,000. Which shows that the Radicals have now been the main losers. The poll of the Right and Centre parties has not greatly changed. What accounts for the great success of the Communists?—which is greater than was generally anticipated. First, economic discontent, and a desire for " new people, " the Communists being, somehow, younger and more enterprising than the Radicals or the Socialists. They have been the driving force of the Front Populaire; and " dynamically " the strongest element in that anti-Fascist force. Their election propaganda has been particularly skilful. Their great slogan has been " une France libre, forte et heureuse." Such " nationalism " may have shocked the more internationally-minded of the Socialists, and the Right may have denounced it as an election manoeuvre, or as a piece of policy dictated by the military requirements of Moscow; but the slogan has caught on, and has reassured many of those who until recently regarded the Communists as an anti-national and, above all, anti-democratic party. These are the main reasons of the Communist success. It was curious how, in his election broadcast speech, M. Thorèz, the Communist leader, demonstrated his ability to " think nationally " by addressing words of sympathy and friendship to the rank and file of the Croix de Feu whose troubles, he said, were the same as those of the young Communists. In the rural areas the success of the Communists would have been even greater than it was but for the sharp rise in agricultural prices in the last six months.

In this election the Croix de Feu have not played an ostentatious role. But they claim to be the " arbiters " of the situation —which is true, however, in only a very limited sense. Whereever possible they have thrown in their weight in favour of the Right Wing candidate, and in some constituencies their manoeuvre has consisted in voting for the Communist in the first round (in order to get the Radical or Socialist to withdraw in his favour) in the expectation that in the second round many Radical voters will vote for the Right Wing candidate rather than for the Communist—in spite of the Front Populaire alliance. It is probable that they also had something to do with M. Herriot's, M. Déat's and M. Guernut's failure to be returned in the first ballot.

It is still difficult to say what the final result of the election will be. Assuming that the Communists obtain fifty seats, the Radicals 120, the Socialists 110 or 120, and the other Left Wing parties another fifty, the non-Communist Left Wing parties will not have much of a majority to work with, unless they depend on Communist support; and it is probable that the Communists will ask for the enforcement of the full Front Populaire programme. At this point a certain number of the Radicals are likely to get cold feet—and will start looking longingly towards the Centre—in spite of their somewhat unhappy experience of " national government." Still, it may be better at the present point not to attempt any forecast. But it may already safely be said that the financial powers will do their best to give the Radicals cold feet. On Monday the Bourse slumped by nearly as much as on the day when Hitler denounced Locarno. It will not be surprising if the powers that be try to exercise pressure on the new Chamber, even before it has met, by creating something of a financial panic.

Paris, April 28th. ALEXANDER WERTH

A LONDON DIARY

A LEADING M.P. tells me that no one in the House can now think of anything else but foreign affairs, but that no one is keen to discuss them, because all parties feel humiliated and confused. There is nothing surprising in this—the only surprise is that there should be anyone like Mr. Garvin who should actually rejoice in our national shame. There was only one clear line in the international confusion of the last few years; to stick to the Covenant was the only policy which would have given us any security. Once we abandoned principle and fell back on realistic calculation of our interests, we were done for. There are so many cross currents that we get cross-eyed trying to follow them and they move so fast and in so many directions at once that we get giddy too. I am reminded of the moral warning given by one of Mr. Laurence Housman's delightful Victorian Aunts to a little girl who insists on turning round and round until she falls down. Her aunt explains that it is not possible to look in every direction at the same time:

Or all the facts that life may show
Combine to give you vertigo!

Just so. And once we left principle behind over Manchuria and looked to expediency here, there and everywhere, nothing was left for us except moral squints and national vertigo.

* * *

With the prospect of war not far off, what is the individual or the nation to do? We have not yet faced the facts. The first is that the horrors of the next war have not been exaggerated but underestimated. Indeed, it is almost impossible to picture the effects of prolonged air-bombardment in a small crowded country. Mr. Duff Cooper, who rages furiously against the Christian churches because some of them have just begun to take Christianity seriously, is, I am told, so unable to face the facts that he actually believes that the next war will be an infantry war—which recalls the reason why the Chinese have no word for a tiger. In prehistoric times there was no escape from the Siberian tiger. So the Chinese, like Mr. Duff Cooper, refused to admit the existence of the horror and always referred to it as " the insect." But there is no escape in euphemisms or big armaments. The sooner we face the fact that the British Empire in isolation cannot be long defended, the better. Once the League crashes, we cannot expect to find South Africa or Canada again coming to our aid. The South Africans, in particular, are disgusted about Abyssinia and are increasingly striving to be an exclusively African Power with domination from Cape Town to Kenya. Having lost the opportunity to stop Japan in 1931 and now having passed over the command of the Near East to Mussolini, it is doubtful how long we can defend India, Australia or any outlying part of the Commonwealth. In isolation the British Empire is a bluff that will soon be called. If we decide on isolationism we had better take stock of ourselves as a small western European State which if it is lucky and unprovocative and lightly armed may some day be as secure, though no more secure, than Holland.

* * *

More sensible than isolationism, but in the long run not much more hopeful, is the policy of the people who want big armaments, plus an alliance with France, Russia and the Little Entente. Foreign affairs cut across all political parties and the protagonists of this policy are Mr. Winston Churchill and Sir Walter Citrine. Mr. Churchill has dropped his anti-Soviet mania and knows that the real menace is Hitler. Indeed, I am told that he now declares that there never was a war of intervention against Bolshevism in 1919; we merely sent men and money to keep the Germans out of Russia! Sir Walter Citrine is the Chairman of the Anti-Nazi Council which believes that the only hope of avoiding war is an economic and cultural boycott which will upset Hitler. I heard him make an impressive speech at a lunch of his Council the other day in company with Sir Norman Angell and Mr. Wickham Steed. Mr. Wickham Steed attacked Mr. Baldwin's sloppiness about Germany. He complained to me afterwards that Mr. Baldwin might be a pig farmer but that he had never learnt to wear hobnailed boots. Then, (not to mention the pro-Nazis and all the people in half-and-half positions) there is the increasing number of enthusiasts who line up behind Dick Sheppard and Mr. Lansbury. As long as this peace movement is based purely on a refusal to fight pledge it will not go very far. A "peace army" to be any good needs discipline and a programme. Saying "No" will not stop war or solve problems. But it has larger possibilities if it evolves a programme to appeal to the innumerable people who are pacifists, but who see the necessity of economic change and who want to do something active to combat Fascist tendencies everywhere. For this reason Aldous Huxley's pamphlet *What are you going to do about it?* (Chatto and Windus, 3*d.*) is of particular interest. It is a downright statement of the pacifist case, but it ends with an outline of a "Constructive Peace" policy. In effect it is an argument that it is possible to find a scientific way out of our dilemmas and it urges people who accept its point of view to set up small groups in every town and village to work out a programme to face and meet the tiger.

* * *

A few weeks ago I gave some account of the American Veterans of Future Wars. Though one enthusiastic lady sent me 2*s.* 6*d.* as a first subscription for the formation of a similar association in this country, I imagine that most English readers assumed that the whole thing was just a good undergraduate joke. But, in fact, it goes from strength to strength. An American correspondent writes that the Veterans have already succeeded in establishing over sixty chapters on different campuses and that others are being formed. The campaign is being carried out with great spirit. James E. Van Zandt, Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, said that the members of the organisation were too yellow to go to war. To this the Veterans of Future Wars replied that Mr. Van Zandt was a Red and challenged him to debate. At Chicago a search is being made for a future Unknown Soldier and in New York an association of Foreign Correspondents of Future Wars is being organised with the object of "training its members in the writing of atrocity stories and garbled war dispatches." But most indignation has been caused by the Foundation of the Gold Star Mothers of the Veterans of Future Wars and the title has now been changed to Ladies' Auxiliary of Future Veterans. Joe E. Murray, former National Chaplain of the Disabled American Veterans, says that if "the students confined their insulting remarks to the Veterans, we would have laughed it off, but they have joked at the name of a group of women we hold sacred!" Undeterred, the manifesto of the Veterans demands "immediate payment, plus 3 per cent. compounded annually from June 1st, 1965, backward to June 1st, 1935," as "it is customary to pay bonuses before they are due."

* * *

A scurrilous Hearst campaign recently led to an inquiry into the supposed Communism of Chicago University. One of the most distinguished witnesses was Professor Robert Moss Lovett who is an out-and-out Pacifist war resister. His examination ran, I understand, as follows:

Question. If a young man had come to you in 1917 to ask whether to join up in the recruiting campaign, what would you have told him?

Answer. I should have given him the same advice that I gave to my son.

Question. What was that?

Answer. That he was of an age and must not accept my views because they were my views; that it was inevitably his own responsibility whether he fought or not.

Question. And what did your son do?

Answer. My son is buried in France.

And that closed the examination.

* * *

The Budget leakage looks like the beginning of an appetising little scandal. Mr. Baldwin says he will allow no personal considerations to stand in the way of a full investigation and Lloyds have already asked stockbrokers to divulge the names of clients who so opportunely insured against an increase in the tea duty. An investigation is certainly very necessary. The leakage can only have come from one of a few civil servants or from a Cabinet Minister. No one seriously suspects a civil servant, and the name of one particular Cabinet Minister is being bandied about the City and Fleet Street and will soon get further. It is important to remember that there was more opportunity for leakage than usual because the Budget Cabinet which usually only meets on the night before the Chancellor's speech, met this year before the recess. So there were three weeks in which the leakage could occur.

* * *

I was writing in my room on Saturday morning when I was disturbed by the insistent buzzing of an aeroplane circling overhead. It destroyed peace and thought; it was as menacing and distracting as an angry wasp that contemplates settling on your hair. Feebly I gave up and looked out of the window. The aeroplane had a long trailer behind it, calling the attention of anyone who might for a moment have forgotten them, to the undoubted merits of a famous fountain pen. My own pen is a staunch standby, but very old and getting a little shrill in the nib. I had been thinking of buying an additional pen of this make. But I resent this form of advertising. I want a pen to help me, not to stop me from writing. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. J. A. Martinez.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

If every man in the Zeebrugge expedition had been killed, every ship sunk, and none of the points attained, it would have been worth while for its tonic properties.—*Liverpool Daily Post.*

The dashes of colour take on an added brilliance in this impressive twilight, the eye being naturally drawn towards them, towards the Guards at the door, and then, in a bound, to the flowers at the altar—the flowers in four gold vases, arranged to represent Lord Derby's racing colours.—Wedding at St. Paul's reported in *Observer*.

In big-game shooting the desideratum is to kill instantly and painlessly. In war, on the other hand, the ideal is *not to kill* but to incapacitate to an extent which, while precluding further active participation in the war in question, will not debar from pursuit of a military or civil career after hostilities have ceased.—Letter in *Sunday Times.*

. . . I am to be found at my home, set deep in the heart of the countryside, working—as only a mathematician can work—with a precision and exactitude which make the differential calculus pale by comparison. For astrology is an exact science.—Asmodel in the *Daily Mail.*

For, after all, the English do not hate the Irish, in spite of past history, any more than we hate the Boers.

We are glad to learn that the British Government have refused to allow the transfer of Roger Casement's body from Pentonville prison to the Irish Free State.—Historicus—*The Churchman's Magazine.*

The net swelled suddenly with rich portent.—*Manchester Guardian* describing goal at the Cup Final.

In all war is an element of the beastly, although modern war is getting better in this respect. Let us stress the point that war is getting more civilised that we may thus stress the irresponsible untruth of Pacifist statement.—*New Milton District Advertiser and Lymington Times.*

(Horses at the Ada Cole Memorial Stables.) How they enjoyed Christmas! They entered thoroughly into the spirit of things and festivities in particular. The Stables were decorated, and on Christmas Day the door of the Superintendent's quarters was left open that the four-footed inmates of the Stables might hear the bells of Bethlehem broadcasted. I think it may be safely said that for many of the horses, Christmas this year was a unique experience.—Third Annual Report, Ada Cole Memorial Stables.

It is curious the number of parents insisting that their children shall learn economics. There never was a more futile subject. It leads nowhere. And a good many come from the economic schools half-developed Socialists and good for very little. Keep away from it. —*Daily Express.*

Foreign travel is good for everybody, but it cannot be forgotten that behind all this anxiety to send children holiday-making on the Continent, is the intention to turn them into priggish little internationalists, the friends of every country but their own.—*Patriot.*

Mrs. Elspeth Cartwright—who by giving birth to a son carries on the 400-year-old tradition of the squires of Aynho, Northamptonshire. —*Sunday Express.*

Indeed, the distressed areas have been created by the failure of Governments to put the national defence in the forefront of national policy.—*Daily Express.*

EVADERS ALL

It is amusing to find a correspondent expressing his indignation at Mr. Neville Chamberlain's comparison between the modern tax-evader and the smuggler. Mr. Chamberlain was merely pointing out that high taxation of any kind inevitably leads to attempts at evasion, but his critic will not have it that there is any analogy whatever between the case of the smuggler and the case of the evader of income tax. "I desire," he writes, "to protest most most strongly against this analogy, which is both false and extremely unfair not only to those persons who have so arranged their affairs as to decrease their liability to tax, but also to those members of the legal profession who have helped them to do so. Smuggling is always both illegal and criminal, and a lawyer who assisted a client to smuggle would be guilty of a criminal offence." And he concludes: "As regards the devices to which Mr. Chamberlain refers, it is, perhaps, sufficient to quote from a speech of the late Lord Tomlin when sitting in the highest appellate tribunal: 'Every man is entitled if he can to order his affairs so as that the tax attaching under the appropriate Acts is less than it otherwise would be.'"

This is admirably put from the point of view of legality; but is the evader of income tax and death duties morally on so very different a plane from the ordinary smuggler? I am not disposed to regard either of them as particularly wicked; but I should imagine, at least, that a man who avoided paying a large sum in death duties was doing a greater injury to his country than a man who avoided paying duty on a pair of silk stockings brought in from abroad. There is this, too, to be said in favour of the smuggler—that he runs a considerable risk by his method of tax-evasion, whereas the man who finds a legal means of evading death duties runs no risk at all.

Both of them, it seems to me, are in most respects much of a muchness. They share with the rest of us the hatred of being taxed and, with more determination than the rest of us, they take steps to avoid taxation. For some reason or other, the mass of human beings—spendthrifts and misers and ordinary decent people alike—have always resented the necessity of paying taxes. They pay their house-rent without any sense of being wronged. They do not regard the grocer, the butcher, the baker, and the wine-merchant as monsters for sending in bills and expecting to be paid within a reasonable time. They volunteer to pay large sums to insurance companies. They squander money daily on tobacconists. Some of them even pay their doctors' bills. Yet no sooner are they called on to pay money to the Chancellor of the Exchequer—who is just as useful in his way as the tobacconist or the wine-merchant—than they cry out as if they had been attacked by a highwayman, and the word "iniquitous" flies from lip to lip in all the accents of the various counties of England, Scotland and Wales. It is obviously because they believe the income tax and death duties in their present form are iniquitous that so many people try to evade them, feeling that in doing so they are fighting for light against darkness. If they did not feel like this it is inconceivable that they would not pay up.

I do not suppose that any tax was ever invented that tax-payers would not have evaded if they could. The Irish peasant once said that he had "never heard tell of a good landlord"; and the tax-payer might say with equal truth that he had never heard tell of a good tax. At least, I cannot remember any tax that was not at the outset objected to on moral grounds. The income tax was denounced as an attack on industry, the suggestion being that no reasonable man could be expected to go on working his hardest if a fixed part of his earnings were immediately appropriated by the Government. The tax on newspapers was assailed as a tax on knowledge. The tax on whisky was declared to be an injustice inflicted on Scotland and Ireland by a selfish English majority. As for the tax on beer, it was an injustice to the working-man. Mr. Lloyd George once proposed a small land-tax, and most of the coronets and Norman blood in the country flung themselves into a desperate struggle as if with a lineal descendant of Bill Sikes. The entertainment tax has been foamed-at-the-mouth against as though it stood like a wall between the English people and their beloved Shakespeare whom they long to see represented on the stage. Even the horse-power tax on motor-cars has been spoken of in accents of horror once reserved for the major vices. From all this what are we to conclude but that there is a profound human instinct which tells us that all taxes are immoral? And, if all taxes are immoral, is it not our duty, as far as is possible, to evade them? It certainly seems so, and the only rational conclusion is that the just man and the tax-evader are merely two names for the same person.

At the same time, it seems odd that patriotic men and women should so resent parting with their money to the country which they love and which performs them so many services. Is it the element of compulsion in taxation which makes it seem hateful and tyrannous? It may be so. After all, Cordelia loved King Lear, but she evaded saying she loved him, when he tried to compel her to say so. All the rest of our expenditure is—on the surface, at least—voluntary, and with simple souls like human beings, it is the surface that matters. There is no government official empowered to give us orders as to what house we shall pay rent for or as to what food or clothes or shaving-soap or newspaper we shall buy. In all these matters we are free and therefore unrebellious. In the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, we are no more free than in the hands of armed robbers. The only difference is that the armed robber says: "Take your hands out of your pockets," whereas the Chancellor of the Exchequer says: "Put your hands into your pockets." In either case we have no alternative but to obey. In both cases we are ruthlessly deprived of one of the supreme pleasures of life—the pleasure of exercising free will.

Not that I want to push the analogy between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the armed robber too far. I agree with those who maintain that whereas the armed robber deprives you of your freedom and your property without giving you anything in return, the Chancellor of the Exchequer deprives you of your freedom and property largely in order to safeguard your freedom and property. Seen in this light, taxes are not only an outrage on freedom but the price of freedom. It must be admitted, however, that, as we pay them, we are conscious only of the outrage. I think it would be a good thing if, in future, Chancellors of the Exchequer called in a committee of psychological experts to advise them as to what can be done to remove this outrage complex from the minds of taxpayers. It was a wise statesman who once said that it is not enough that men should be free: they must also feel free. And it is undeniable that, as taxes are at present asked for and paid, we feel no freer than the captive Regulus.

Much might be done to relieve the situation if a slight alteration were made in taxation forms. Thus, when the bill for the income-tax arrived, the taxpayer might also be presented with a form which he could fill in, saying upon what object he would like to see his money spent—rearmament, education, housing, agricultural development, or any of a dozen other objects. Presented with a form like this the extreme reactionary who until now has felt justified in evading taxation because the money is largely wasted on education and demoralising social services would lose his motive for withholding his money, since he could now secure that it would be profitably spent on the Army, Navy and Air Force. Similarly, the rich left-winger who has hitherto looked on money spent on preparations for war as both wasteful and wicked, would joyfully pay his taxes in full, now that they would be devoted to housing or other good causes close to his heart. I am sure that by some such method as this, the Chancellor of the Exchequer could wheedle far more money out of the tax-payer and at the same time leave the wheedled tax-payer an infinitely happier man.

Arrangements might be made for giving even the indirect tax-payer this desirable liberty of choice in the apportionment of his money. There is no reason why, for example, every packet of cigarettes should not be stamped in such a way that the purchaser should be able to ask for a packet of cigarettes that would help to pay for rearmament or a packet that would help to pay for the upkeep of Stonehenge. "Let me see, sir," the shopkeeper would say; "I think you usually have 'rearmament.'" With what a glow many a patriot would leave the shop with his packet of gaspers!

This, it seems to me, would be a long step towards the democratisation of taxation; and I cannot believe that, when once taxation had been democratised, the rich would any longer pay large sums to lawyers in order to learn how to evade taxes of which they are allowed "practically" to spend the proceeds themselves.

Y. Y.

Correspondence

BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

SIR,—In a recent debate Mr. Harold Nicolson said that there is a "great wave of pro-German feeling sweeping the country." Mr. Nicolson is right and one consequence of that wave of feeling is that a great deal of nonsense is being talked and written. One brand of that nonsense seems to me especially dangerous, the relapse into the bad old habit of sermons directed at those wicked and cynical foreigners who are, at the moment, the French. There is, of course, a permanent suspicion of the French which is easy to rouse. Has not Mr. E. S. P. Haynes told us that Jowett was convinced that the real words written on the gates of Hell were, "Ici on parle français"! The indignant moralist who knows what horrid things the word "French" stands for is an incurable case, but there are other preachers who are not subject to this fixation who might improve their manners if they took thought. If we are to denounce the French for the sins of M. Laval, then we cannot go on excusing the German people (always apparently in a state of hypnotism) for the sins of Herren Hitler and Streicher, nor is it easy to find arguments for the foreigner who taxes us with the sins of Sir John Simon or who sees an awkward resemblance to the racing tipster in "sealed-mouth Stanley." But there is a widespread British belief that things that are very alike are also totally dissimilar, that it is the most natural thing in the world for the Germans to remember the invasion of the Ruhr and pathological meanness and cowardice for Frenchmen to remember the invasion of the Nord. I have recently been examining Oxford scholarship papers, and I have been struck by the comparative unanimity of the young in condemning the French ("that decadent nation" as one young man put it). Such an attitude of approval for Hitler comes with consistency from stout imperialists who are for holding what we have, but it was even more widely spread among pacifist young men who approved of the Union resolution. Why should it be right for a young Englishman to refuse to fight for his King and country and all right for Germans to be resolved, like Herr von Papen, not to die in their beds if they can help it (Herr von Papen, of course, has already managed to help it)? I suggest that it is to the point that Clemenceau and Poincaré are dead; so, I gather, is a certain Mr. Lloyd George who signed the Treaty of Versailles and ran the great election of 1918. The young men who are full of pretty sentiments about the niceness of the Germans should indulge these sentiments with their eyes open to the fact that no one, not even the most staunch isolationist, expects to be killed by a French bomb; it is not all of the case, but is part of it that when we talk of the danger of war we mean a war begun by Germany. Germany may have excellent reasons for making war, but for a pure pacifist that is beside the point. The way to secure peace may be to confide in Hitler or it may not, but all arguments on that point should start from the basis that the decision about war and peace will be made by Hitler not by us or by the French. No ruler of either Britain or France would dare to make war; we know this. Not only do we not know it about Germany but we do know that Herr Hitler may have to make war, not because he is a wicked man like Poincaré, but because his situation is one in which he cannot retreat and in which war may be the only thing left to do. There are certain evasions, retreats, submissions which a dictator cannot permit himself. A democracy (we have only to think of Mr. MacDonald) can swallow any kind of climb-down. Herr Hitler may be a nice man; so was Napoleon III.

I suggest then that we get down to brass tacks and among them is one so long that it will penetrate even a Treasury-bench hide, the tack that inserts the lesson that an omnipotent dictator is a prisoner of his omnipotence. I do not suggest that this is a reason for not dealing with him, but it is a reason for not pretending that a union of hearts is what we need; we need first of all a clearing of heads. While that laborious job is going on we might have a close season in historical sermons if only because it will not be so easy to show an overwhelmingly favourable balance of trade as Mr. Garvin and Mr. Lloyd George seem to think. (I mean the member for Caernarvon Boroughs, not his deceased namesake.) The iniquity of limiting a country's military independence will be commended to British negotiators with Egypt by cynical foreigners. Of course, it will be said, there is a big difference. There is. Germany is feared. Egypt is not. *Parcere superbis et debellare subjectos* is a respectable policy, but it goes ill with sermons. Then lamentations about the irreparable psychological damage done by black troops in the Ruhr may provoke some Frenchmen to suggest that not all countries could run to Black-and-Tans. If we are going to talk sense in the next few months, the old British luxury of moral superiority will have to be rationed; there isn't nearly enough of it to go round; there is hardly enough to supply the House of Lords. Even if this be denied, the continental market is saturated and stern rebukes to the French for their nervousness about invasion will get the razzberry, a razzberry that may well turn into a hearty laugh when they turn to read *The Observer* on the Sunday after it is announced that Heligoland is again a fortified submarine base.

D. W. BROGAN

SIR,—The outcome of the Locarno and Abyssinian crises forces us now to ask, "What peace policy, if any, will be open to us if collective security is no longer possible?"

The trouble is that there is no substitute for collective security. We cannot hope to eliminate war except by transferring force from the litigants to the law and making it clear that aggression will never again succeed. If collective security does not exist it will have to be attempted. This means that any interim policy will have to keep open the possibility of building up genuine collective security later on. We should resist by every means in our power any policy which does not fulfil this condition.

Merely to join in competitive rearmament with weapons capable of sudden and unprecedented destruction is bound to make war inevitable, closing the door on any chance of building up collective security. That policy must be resisted.

But it is essential to find an alternative—a policy that will neither provoke attack by menacing rearmament nor tempt it by mere unilateral weakness. There is such a policy. As regards foreign commitments except those which will be required if a genuine system of collective security is attempted, covering all Europe with or without Germany. As regards defences, we should insist that all new defence expenditure be concentrated on non-offensive measures for reducing vulnerability—on defence without menace. For example, we should support the provision of anti-aircraft guns, but not of bombers; the storage of food, instead of the building of warships. Jonathan Griffin

THE UNITED STATES AND THE OIL SANCTION

Sir,—Replying last week (April 21st) to a suggestion that if an embargo on oil to Italy had been put on in January the virtual co-operation of the United States might have been secured, Lord Cranborne told the House that:

> The information in the hands of H.M. Government gave no reason to suppose that the United States Government were ready to co-operate at that time."

This is astonishing. As stated by the Washington correspondent of the *Times* on February 26th, the United States during the early months of the war " was not working in concert with the League, but was in advance of the League " in discouraging the traffic in oil with Italy. Government action and public opinion, however, had been much damped down by the Hoare-Laval proposals. Sir Arthur Salter, confirming this view in a *Times* letter on February 29th, described it as " doubtful—but not worse than doubtful " whether the position could then be retrieved. But immediately afterwards this doubt seemed removed by President Roosevelt's renewed appeal, on the occasion of his signing of the new Neutrality Act, to American business men not to sell goods of any sort to either of the combatants beyond the normal peace-time quantities and his statement that " the policies announced by the Secretary of State and myself " last October " will be maintained in effect." This (said the New York correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* on March 1st):

> is interpreted here as giving notice to the League of Nations on the eve of the meeting to consider oil sanctions against Italy that if such sanctions are imposed the executive branch of the American Government will do all it can to support the effectiveness of the sanctions.

He added that the measures already taken were believed to have been

> largely effective in curtailing the activities of the big oil companies, which are, in any case, inclined to regard Italy as a poor credit risk,

but that Government pressure had been less effective with the small producers. The measures alluded to included

> strict examination of the exporters' Federal income tax returns, discouragement of Government aid to ships engaged in this kind of commerce, and the creation of public feeling against offenders.

Further details of the forms of action taken and statements made were given in my previous letter to you on February 29th.

All this suggests that the United States Government has some reason to resent attempts made here to impute responsibility to the United States for the League's failure to impose an oil sanction. Lord Cranborne indeed repudiated " any criticism of the United States " on the ground that " they are not members of the League and are entitled to take what view they like on questions of this kind." It would seem in fact that both the " views " and the actions of the United States have been more helpful in this matter than our own. The question is whether it is even now too late to impose this sanction. Eleanor Rathbone

ALBERT HALL

Sir,—An application for the Albert Hall for the purpose of holding a meeting has recently been made by the Communist Party. This application was refused. The Hall has now been let on a number of occasions to the British Union of Fascists. We wish to protest against this clear case of discrimination between political bodies holding differing opinions. The Corporation of the Royal Albert Hall of Arts and Science is a public body working under Royal Charter. It is, in our view, a grave matter when such a body reveals political bias.

G. P. Gooch
Charlotte Haldane
J. B. S. Haldane
Aldous Huxley
Julian S. Huxley
Storm Jameson
D. N. Pritt
Herbert Read
Helen Simpson
Leonard Woolf

For Intellectual Liberty,
110 Heath Street,
London, N.W.3.

AMERICA AND JAPAN

Sir,—Can Sir Francis Lindley, with his great authority, help us a little further?

In the *Times* of February 24th there appeared an important message from the Washington correspondent, which contained this sentence:

> When Japan invaded Manchuria, said Senator Borah, and the then Secretary of State, Mr. Stimson, appealed to the nations dominant in the League for co-operation in the interest of treaty and territorial integrity, Great Britain through her accredited spokesman declared, " with some degree of bluntness," that she would remain neutral.

What answer can be made to Senator Borah?

Holt Cottage,
Whitstable.

Maurice Spencer,
Colonel (retired)

THE JURY'S MERCY

Sir,—One had hoped that Sir John Simon (of all Home Secretaries) would not have sent to the gallows a woman (Waddingham) strongly recommended to mercy by her country (i.e. her jury).

The verdict of the jury in a capital charge should be sacrosanct and inviolable; one and indivisible; indistinguishable in member, joint and limb. It should not be open to the mere custodian of the King's and the Country's mercy to select that part of the jury's verdict of which he approves and to reject that part of it which he disapproves of; and then to shut the gates of mercy on even one of the worst of womankind. W. J. Wenham

5 Gray's Inn Square,
London, W.C.1.

LEFT THEATRE

Sir,—The Left Theatre ran a successful Play Competition last year, and the response from an unusual range of writers showed that there exists an important potential source of plays, on a variety of subjects, untapped by the commercial theatre.

The Left Theatre has, therefore, decided to run a similar competition this year with this difference, that the competition will be under three heads:

(1) Full-length plays.
(2) One-act plays.
(3) Short sketches (preferably of a satirical character which the Left Theatre could include in a revue it is planning.

The prize-winning play will receive production this autumn, provided a suitable standard is reached.

Typescripts are required to be in by September 1st.

Left Theatre, 6 Meard Street,
Wardour Street, W.1.

Barbara Nixon

[We are glad to note that a Left Theatre Conference is to be held at the Westminster Theatre on Sunday, May 10th, to discuss the forming of a trade union theatre in Britain. Amongst its conveners are five Labour M.P.s, A. V. Alexander, John Jagger, John Parker, Tom Smith, and Miss Ellen Wilkinson. A. M. Wall, of the London Trades Council and Actors' Equity is chairman, and Miss Margaret Webster will speak for the players. The Conference will see a Left Theatre play *Stay Down Miner* by Montagu Slater, after its own discussions are over. The interesting question is whether this attempt can lead to the formation of a permanent and living trade union theatre.—Ed. *N. S. & N.*]

OPTICAL BENEFIT

Sir,—Dr. Anderson, in his letter to The New Statesman and Nation of April 25th, defends the existence of the National Ophthalmic Treatment Board as some attempt to fulfil the wish of the British Medical Association to provide a recognised Ophthalmic Medical Service which would cater for the poorer classes.

During the years the British Medical Association was ignoring the needs of the poorer classes, the qualified sight-testing opticians of this country on their own initiative, unaided by the medical fraternity, though frequently hampered by some of them, produced an efficient service and supply throughout the whole country. Even the most remote parts were served, and it is the proud and justifiable claim of the Joint Council of Qualified Opticians that it produced this efficient service, so thorough in every way, that no insured person need lose time from work, nor be involved in travelling expenses of more than a few coppers to obtain the fully qualified service offered by the Register of the Joint Council of Qualified Opticians.

The "traffic" which it was hoped by the British Medical Association would be secured for the National Ophthalmic Treatment Board was to provide fees of half a guinea per person for the ophthalmic surgeon and an essential part of the N.O.T.B. scheme is that the insured person is compelled at the dictation of the British Medical Association to buy spectacles from a particular establishment of dispensing opticians approved by the National Ophthalmic Treatment Board.

There has never been a more determined dictation by medical interests than this, and the methods of the National Ophthalmic Treatment Board border very closely, if they do not actually infringe, the ethics of the medical profession in the matter of advertising for professional business.

The Approved Societies of this country have such considerable experience of the service of qualified sight-testing opticians that they have now decided to continue to avail themselves of the qualified sight-testing opticians' service, and are quite willing to leave insured persons to continue the exercise of freedom of choice. The result is that, in spite of Dr. Anderson's claim to a steadily growing success, the vast bulk of the National Health Insurance work—optical benefit—is carried out by the qualified sight-testing opticians and not by the National Ophthalmic Treatment Board. It is significant to note that the policy of the Approved Societies has the statutory approval of the Minister of Health.

Many general medical practitioners have resented the attempts of the British Medical Association to impose upon doctors and patients, panel or otherwise, the direction of sight-testing cases to the clinics of the National Ophthalmic Treatment Board and unjustifiably styled a "National Eye Service."

I shall be happy to supply any particulars of the service of the Joint Council of Qualified Opticians with the same readiness as Dr. Anderson suggests the National Ophthalmic Treatment Board would be prepared to do.

The Joint Council of Qualified Opticians,
65 Brook Street, London, W.1.

J. H. SUTCLIFFE,
Registrar

SIR,—Dr. G. C. Anderson's vigorous evasion would not call for an answer, but as it incidentally denies the truth of statements in my letter I trust you will allow me to reply.

It has been common knowledge for many years that the medical curriculum is overloaded; although refraction of the eyes was not considered part of the general practitioners' duties, yet they are now being invited to take a short course in ophthalmology and add this work to their daily practice. Is it too much to say that this work will be, unavoidably, of a low standard?

It is sufficient for the doctor to take the short course, it is not considered necessary for him to prove that he has attained any standard of efficiency at the end, and it is within our experience, coming in touch with the results, that the standard is far below that demanded by the optical examining bodies, a standard arrived at after many years of specialisation.

Is it too much to say that an inferior optical service is being forced upon the insured public to replace an existing qualified service? Both of these "innuendoes" can be enlarged upon if desired.

The Ministry of Health regulation compels the patient to visit his panel doctor for a certificate that optical treatment is required. The medical press openly invites the panel doctor to use his position, which should be one of professional trust, to direct the patient into medical channels, and it is known by the optician, the doctor, the patient and the Approved Societies that the regulation serves no other purpose—the Ministry refuses to take action. The doctors are regularly visited by canvassers who are, bluntly, touting for business for the N.O.T.B.—who pays these canvassers and for whose benefit? While Dr. Anderson views with complacency the fact that the Approved Societies are openly questioning the validity of medical certificates.

My reason for writing to a paper of your standing is that the subject may attract the attention of responsible people. Is there no one on the Medical Councils who values medical prestige and can modify a course which is to the detriment of the public and the medical and optical professions?

This letter may even be read by the Controller to the Ministry of Health, who states that he has no evidence that the regulation is being abused and, when the evidence is provided, blandly states that anyhow it does not matter—which prompts my original inquiry, is the Ministry under medical dictation or is it a public body? J. ROSEN

142 Marylebone Road,
Baker Street, N.W.1.

THE WHITE RUTHENIANS

SIR,—A great deal has been heard from time to time about the Ukrainian and German minorities in Poland and not so much about the White Ruthenians. The White Ruthenian Republic was formed in 1918 with its capital at Minsk. The Peace Treaty of Riga in 1921 between Poland and the U.S.S.R. divided White Ruthenia between these two countries. The eastern part, the biggest section, with a population of nearly 12,000,000 was left under the Soviet.

Western White Ruthenia, with a population of over 4,000,000, was left under Poland, and has been very much neglected. In 1924 there was a widespread famine especially in the voivodship of Vilna. The White Ruthenian language has been suppressed by the Polish authorities, particularly in church and religious life—sometimes with the help of machine guns as occurred in Zodziszki. The Polish language is used in the Roman Catholic churches, and more than a million White Ruthenian Catholics have no parish church. On the other hand, in the Orthodox churches, the authorities, when it is not possible to introduce the Polish language, support the Russian language. Co-operative societies are not allowed as they are considered by the police as something dangerous to public security. At the end of March of this year, the police authorities in Vilna confiscated the White Ruthenian newspapers *Bielaruskaya Krynica* and the *Novy Schlakh* because they used the words "Western White Ruthenia" or "White Ruthenian lands."

Those who desire to maintain the Peace of Europe must watch very closely the interests of the submerged nationalities in the East. The assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand at Serajevo in 1914 was intimately bound up with the question of Minority Policy. CECIL L'ESTRANGE MALONE

6 Phene Street, Chelsea, S.W.3.

HACKNEY MARSHES

SIR,—Your comment on the Hackney Marshes dispute is unfair to those who oppose the London County Council's proposals, for not only the Labour Party's opponents in the Council, but many others who like myself are interested not only in the preservation of open spaces but in the planning of London think Mr. Morrison and his Party to be making a great mistake.

The proposal to build flats on Hackney Marshes is not only a mistake in itself, for East London cannot afford to lose a single acre of open spaces, and needs many thousands more (see the Greater London Regional Planning Committee's Report), but it is even more serious as evidence of the Council's continued refusal to take a long-sighted view of London's housing problems. The history of the London County Council's housing efforts since the War, from the moment of the conception of the Dagenham scheme by the Moderates to the present Labour majority's plans for building on open spaces, is a record of feebleness—the line of least resistance—and absence of any sense of civic order.

The slums must be removed; but in doing it the future of London must be considered, and the facts borne in mind that London has too many people in it and that the way in which London is being permitted to grow both upwards and outwards is a horror. The Council is doing nothing to lessen that horror. Its policy has helped to make the Greater London Regional Planning Committee ridiculous, and its haphazard choice of housing sites has raised vigorous protests from the Essex and Surrey County Councils.

Mr. Morrison is an advocate of the Satellite Town form of development, and it is not strange that he should be expected to put its principles into practice, which he has hitherto shown no sign of doing. Until he, or someone else does so, the redevelopment of London will be impossible, the slum problem will not be solved, and the muddle of London will steadily increase. Until the housing programme of the London County Council includes the building of half a dozen satellite towns, no housing proposals put forward by the Labour Party or by the Moderates will deserve to be taken seriously.

This is not a party but a public issue. The attitude of all parties in London to town-planning is a disgrace to civic patriotism, and the indifference to it of all public authorities, central and local, is a national humiliation. If Parliament were to pass the L.C.C. Bill it would mean a defeat for social decency and a victory for political obstinacy. C. B. PURDOM

36 Great Russell Street,
London, W.C.1.

[However desirable the policy of satellite towns may be, we surely cannot afford to wait for its general acceptance and carrying out before dealing with the urgent task of clearing slums. The L.C.C. is not in a position at present to build "half a dozen satellite towns."—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE PRICE OF FISH

SIR,—Mr. Vallance has done good service in calling attention to the miserable return which the Cornish fisherman of to-day receives on his labour. He points to the violent fluctuations in prices resulting from the alternate gluts and scarcities of fish, and draws the conclusion that the sea is a "temperamental mistress." But it is not so much Nature which is to blame in this matter as Man. Intensive trawling throughout the Channel, by breaking up the large shoals of fish, is robbing the inshore fisherman by cutting off his supplies at the source. Such broken shoals as find their way in to the shallower waters result in the "patchy" fishing which Mr. Vallance describes. The fishermen themselves are fully aware of this, and point to the fact that when trawling was in abeyance during the War fish were more plentiful upon the coast than they had been for many years past.

The restoration of the inshore fisheries of Cornwall, as elsewhere, must ultimately depend on obtaining some measure of international agreement with regard to trawling and the size of the mesh used. More, however, is required even than that of a return of the fish to the coast. Present methods of marketing and distribution are antiquated and wasteful. The local buyers sell to commissioned agents, who sell to distributors, who sell to retail traders, who sell to the public. I believe it to be a fact, as I showed some years ago in a book called *Cornish Seafarers*, that of every £1 worth of herrings consumed by the public after a large catch, fifteen shillings and sixpence goes to the middlemen, two shillings to transport, and only half a crown to the fisherman who has risked his capital and, not infrequently, his life to obtain it.

There is indeed a tragic irony in the slogan "Eat more Fish" when it is realised that the "rings" which have adopted this expensive method of gaining customers are chiefly responsible for making the goods they advertise too dear for those same potential customers to buy. A. K. HAMILTON JENKIN

10 Eton Road, N.W.3.

EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN

SIR,—Your fairmindedness in allowing a man living on 4*s*. per week to write letters to your paper emboldens me to answer Miss Rathbone's letter of last week.

Family allowances, widows' pensions, the suggested spinsters' pensions are all "red herrings" drawn across the track of equal pay for equal work which is, so obviously, just. If only that one simple fact could be established all the other "red herrings" would fast disappear.

As a widow with three young school children, I find the "pension" a definite liability. I only want to be allowed work on the same terms as a man. If I scrub the floor for my grocer at the corner of the street I am paid at the rate of 9*d*. per hour. When a man scrubs it he is paid 11*d*. per hour; both taking exactly the same time to do the job.

Why is it that only the large class of working women, from the chars like myself to those in the higher grades of the civil service, are so penalised? We do the same work but obtain much less money, whereas those women of the community, whether married or single, who live on the interests of investments, gain their mode of livelihood on exactly the same terms as a man. Imagine a company prospectus declaring dividends with family allowances! What women would invest their money in a company where men had a higher dividend?

May I also add that in all those spheres of life where equal pay has been tried, it is acknowledged an unqualified success. Here is a list of a few such small sections of the community:

Members of Parliament.
Many higher grades of the L.C.C.
Nine Borough Councils for all grades.
Factory Inspectors Grade II.
Officials of certain Trade Unions.
Borstal.
Secretariat of the League of Nations.

A WORKING WOMAN OF WESTMINSTER

Westminster, S.W.1.

MRS. THRALE

SIR,—In his generous and illuminating review of my book, *Mrs. Thrale of Streatham*, for which I desire to thank him, Mr. Peter Quennell has made a curious mistake. Mrs. Thrale's description of the Burke household was *not* "printed in the *Anecdotes*," but was written in the garrulous pages of Mrs. Thrale's private journal. Mr. Quennell would have been more correctly informed if he had read attentively p. 131 of my book before going on to p. 132—for it is quite evident that he has not read Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*. The whole point about the "unexpected" passage is therefore lost by Mr. Quennell. Undiluted veracity seldom appears in Mrs. Thrale-Piozzi's writings, but it seems to appear much more frequently in her *Thraliana* than it does in her shrewdly premeditated accounts intended for publication.

Hedgerley Lane, C. E. VULLIAMY
Beaconsfield.

Miscellany

"FALSTAFF" AND "DIE MEISTERSINGER"

I WROTE recently of the difficulties encountered at Covent Garden due to the fact that we have no National Theatre of our own and have to rely upon State-subsidised foreign opera houses for the majority of the artists who provide us with our operatic performances at Covent Garden and also at Glyndebourne. Some of my readers unfamiliar with conditions on the Continent may have wondered at my not mentioning the Vic-Wells theatres in this connection. But it cannot be emphasised too strongly that the "Old Vic" and Sadler's Wells cannot be regarded as a substitute but only as a training ground for a National Theatre. I yield to nobody in my enthusiasm for the work which Miss Lilian Baylis and others have done for these two theatres. From being a very fifth-rate sort of popular theatre where occasionally, however, there were Shakespearean productions more authentic and finer in all but wasteful expenditure than most West End performances of Shakespeare, but where the operatic performances were on an extremely low level with indifferent singers and a miserable scratch orchestra, the Old Vic on the opening of its fellow-theatre Sadler's Wells became one of the partners in two popular theatres which, if they progress as they have done during the past two years, will reach the level of a popular State-subsidised theatre like the Kroll Opera House in Berlin.

I have nothing to do with the dramatic performances in these columns, so I shall confine myself to saying that at Sadler's Wells during the past two years nothing less than an absolute transformation has taken place in the standard of opera and ballet. The change in the ballet has been, in my opinion, largely due to managerial enterprise in associating with Miss Ninette de Valois that brilliant young choreographer and dancer, Mr. Frederick Ashton, whose great talent may be seen in such remarkable ballets as *Le Baiser de la Fée*—a masterpiece worthy of Diaghilev's great company—*Apparitions* and *Façade*. But Mr. Ashton could have done nothing without the collaboration of a good musician and conductor and Sadler's Wells was lucky in obtaining the services of another young man, Mr. Constant Lambert, who is not only an able musician, but understands ballet as many musicians do not.

The result of engaging these two young and enterprising artists has been that the general standard of the *corps de ballet* in technique, and discipline has improved out of all recognition, while the shabby orchestra has given place to a splendid body of instrumentalists capable of rendering justice to the most difficult and exacting scores. The result is that if I am asked by any foreign visitor to London to recommend a theatre, I now invariably say, " Go to the ballet at Sadler's Wells, it is really first-class," and I know that my friends will get a revelation.

In my opinion, the opera has not quite kept pace with the ballet in its progress, although its progress also has been marked. The present production of Verdi's *Falstaff*, however, inclines me to the belief that in time the operatic performances will reach the same high level as the ballet. *Falstaff* under Mr. Warwick Braithwaite is a production that does the greatest credit to everybody concerned, and it shows that given the right spirit and the fundamental essentials of thorough rehearsing, accuracy and integrity, a company of singers, not one of whom is a Caruso or a Destinn, a Chaliapin, or a Rosa Ponselle, can give a fine, vital and satisfying performance even of so difficult a work as *Falstaff*. What pleased me especially about the *Falstaff* production was its rhythmic strictness and liveliness. There was nothing slip-shod or loose, none of that dancing on a slack rope characteristic of weak musicians who have no essential grasp of rhythm. Even in the very difficult final choral fugue the singing and playing were clean and lively. Therefore it mattered little that the women for the most part were not vocally adequate, their voices lacking the bite necessary for the style of *Falstaff*. I was all the more delighted with Mr. Warwick Braithwaite's *Falstaff* for the reason that his recent *Figaro* disappointed me very much. When I heard it the chorus was feeble, the orchestral playing reduced to an accompaniment—reminiscent of the way English pianists play the pianoforte parts of Schubert's songs when engaged by some celebrated singer to " accompany "—and the whole production lacked verve and grip. But Miss Baylis must be more severe whenever conductors of the Sadler's Wells opera fail to show the necessary vitality or the musicianship. The conductor is much more important than any individual singer, and the progress towards the highest possible level of operatic performances depends first upon him and then on the producer.

The Covent Garden season opened on Monday night with a performance of *Die Meistersinger* under Sir Thomas Beecham, which was on a very high level all round. The new tenor, Torsten Ralf, has an agreeable voice and an acceptable presence —and both are rare for Teutonic tenors. The new Eva, Tiana Lemnitz, from the Berlin State Opera, was very satisfactory. The Beckmesser of Karl August Neumann was a little " thinner " and less effective than I had anticipated, but perhaps we have become used to a robuster, even more farcical style. The production was very smooth and effective with none of the contretemps which in the past have tended to mar some Covent Garden performances. I do not think, however, that the sudden appearance of a waning moon at the end of Act II was a very good idea, but this is a mere trifle. Bockelmann is perhaps the best Hans Sachs living and on the whole this is one of the smoothest and liveliest of recent productions of the opera.

To go to *Die Meistersinger* fresh from hearing Verdi's *Falstaff* is an interesting experience. That Berlioz and Verdi are much superior to Wagner as composers I and others have been proclaiming for a long time, and no doubt my readers are tired of hearing it ; nevertheless they must remember that it still represents only an informed inside core of musical opinion and for the vast majority of music teachers as well as for the public it is just heresy. But listening attentively to *Die Meistersinger* again, for I don't know what number of times, I was struck by the fact that one would miss nothing whatever were all the vocal parts eliminated. Also, that they might be all rewritten with entirely different notes without damaging or indeed altering the effect. I think that a stage performance in a version, which starting at 6.30 and ending after 11.30 was only slightly cut, hardly does justice to Wagner, whose instrumental web of sound has many interesting and a few almost beautiful moments, but is nowhere truly dramatic or moving. To have to watch the tedious stage-business during the first act with its heavy-handed Teutonic humourless humour, its fussy pedantry and inveterate long-windedness is a sore trial to the patience. Indeed, were a prize to be offered for the most boring first act in all opera, the first act of *Die Meistersinger* would either win it or tie in a dead heat with an act of some other Wagner opera, such as the first act of *Parsifal* or of *Siegfried*. Personally, I would give *Die Meistersinger* the first prize. But it is a perfect opera, I should say, to be broadcast, for it flows at an even pace smoothly and unexcitedly through a Yorkshire high tea, a Mayfair dinner and a Savoy supper with unexhilarating but beneficially gastronomic effect, giving one a feeling of having spent one's time improvingly and obtaining together with one's food an insight into the life of the Middle Ages when there were no policemen and Scotland Yard did not exist, but one was pleasantly reassured in one's nightly slumbers by the deep romantic tones of the watchman's horn as he walked the silent trafficless streets after midnight.

A mellowness of quality and a unity of character *Die Meistersinger* undoubtedly possesses, and when we add to this a beautiful quintet and a monotony of reiteration that almost borders on monomania we need not be surprised at its popularity with the public. The fact that the music is entirely devoid of real gaiety or the shock of originality will explain why it is idolised by all musical academicians and the dearest pundits of moribund conservatoriums.

W. J. TURNER

"PARNELL" AND THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN

IT is a considerable merit of the dramatic censorship in this country that it is open to argument. The Lord Chamberlain makes no claim to infallibility and the occupant of that office frequently has that strength of mind which consists of mind-changing in a public place. He and his predecessors have repented and relented a score of times and within the last weeks the ban upon *Bitter Harvest*, a most chaste and delicate play about *la vie amoureuse* of Lord Byron, has been raised in response to a protest in which the dramatic critics were probably helpful. Accordingly, at the risk of being considered a nuisance by St. James's Palace, I take leave to protest once more, this time at the veto on *Parnell* by Elsie T. Schauffer, a play which may be seen within the privacy of the Gate Theatre Studio. Here Miss Margaret Rawlings renews the beautiful performance of Mrs. O'Shea which delighted the playgoers of New York last autumn.

If this piece were merely concerned to exhibit some dirty linen of the eighteen-eighties, if it vulgarly exploited Parnell's downfall as one of the World's Great Tragedies of Love in the glutinous manner of a magazine feature, there might be a case for suppression in the interests of surviving relatives. But it does nothing of the kind. If it errs from fact, I should imagine that it errs on the side of idealising the relationship of Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea and puts excessive emphasis on the marriage of true minds. If I were a relative of either of those people, I should be deeply gratified by the playwright's handling of their characters. Nothing is here for shame. Pericles was not more noble nor Aspasia more wise.

There remains the fact that other real characters appear, some members of the Irish party and also the formidable figure of Mr. Gladstone. But is the great Gladstonian façade a damning ingredient in the opinion of the Lord Chamberlain's office ? I think not. There was a short play by Mr. Laurence Housman called *Mr. Gladstone's Comforter*, publicly produced with the Censor's licence at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, on October 31st, 1929. In this Mr. A. E. Filmer played John Morley, Miss Winifred Evans Mrs. Gladstone, and Mr. Bertram Wallis Gladstone himself. So evidently the subject is not taboo. Plays about "Dizzy" are frequent and the screen is permitted to bring history even closer in the form of Rhodes and Kruger. If it is argued that *Parnell* is disrespectful to Mr. Gladstone, I should argue that the picture of him is just and that, in any case, it is no business of any artist to deal only in compliments and homage. After all, myriads of British people have had their young minds strongly influenced during the last decade and a half by Mr. Wells's *Outline of History* and the Wellsian handling of Gladstone was severe. For my own part, I thought that Mr. Arthur Young's performance of Gladstone at the Gate Theatre was a good one and the dramatist's notion fair. Gladstone, as a statesman, had to consider the people whom he was coaxing to support the supposedly dangerous course of Home Rule; at least in their public professions they disliked adultery and it would not ease the passage of a great liberating measure to ignore the piety of those liberal voters who alone could be persuaded to support him.

Is the Lord Chamberlain's office working by any definite rule as to "real people" on the stage? I can see no sign of it. Once I thought that there was some special date, a kind of magic number, after which historical play-writing became illicit. But now I find no rule of logic or of thumb. Mr. Gladstone is permissible here and forbidden there. People who rule others must have rules of their own unless they are to be accused of a wayward and irresponsible tyranny. Is it unfair to ask of St. James's Palace that it publish the laws of public playwriting as Lord's and St. Andrews publish the laws of cricket and of golf? It is a fact worth the Lord Chamberlain's attention that his colleagues in authority at the Board of Education are busily crying up the drama as an element in the educational curriculum. The reading, observance, and performance of plays at school have, like history and general knowledge, a great deal of official encouragement. If the drama is good enough for the Board of Education, can it be to St. James's Palace so bad a medium for treating modern history (in this case the Anglo-Irish history of forty-five years ago) that adults as well as juveniles must be officially saved from defilement by such playhouse pitch?

In the meanwhile, until the ban is lifted, let me recommend *Parnell* to those who can visit the Gate Theatre, which they can only do as (or with) members. The piece covers the ten years, 1881–1891, and gives a persuasive picture of those human limitations on which the fortunes of causes and of nations so easily founder. Mr. Wyndham Goldie's enormous black beard and general air of morbidity and mortality may somewhat obstruct one's belief in the immense power and fascination of Parnell. But we must not be so deterred from belief. If Dr. Grace could score his centuries under such handicap, could not Parnell sway voters and hearts as well? I doubt, also, whether Mrs. O'Shea had quite that air of vibrant intelligence which Miss Rawlings bestows upon her. But the performance of both has been beautifully composed and there are some admirable Irishmen, especially Mr. J. A. O'Rourke and Mr. Harry Hutchinson, waiting at Westminster to consider the latest news from Galway, Eltham, Downing Street and the conscience of two nations. Miss Marda Vanne gives a charmingly crisp performance of a wise old lady and Mr. James Mason's O'Shea has the right jaunty way with him; was O'Shea only a poor fish unworthy of the deeper waters more congenial to that enchanting mermaid, Kitty? Perhaps, but after all, "he was her man and she done him wrong." In any case, the policy of Coercion, as expressed in a Stage Censorship, is once more "doing wrong" to Irish history and British audiences.

IVOR BROWN

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Shadow," at the Playhouse

Trite is the adjective for this play, but it has one very real merit. In an age when craftsmanship is a dying tradition and we will go on our knees to a really first-rate carpenter or plasterer the fact that Mr. Maltby knows his job from A to Z is a delight. It is, indeed, Mr. Maltby's evening, for apart from the play itself he contributes, in the character of Ronald Austin, a performance of such gusto that it really does flatten the walls of his county Jericho. The merit of the plot lies in the perfectly natural method of treating the catastrophe that happens to two married people, who having taken the trouble to go to bed with each other in a sordid hotel in London—they could perfectly well have afforded an expensive hotel where their misdeeds would have passed unnoticed—have the misfortune to find that the occupant next door has been murdered in the night. The complications of their subsequent difficulties and the solution are admirably worked out, while the neatness of entrance and exits and the linking of one scene to another show great skill. If your brand of thriller is shag, this is no good to you; if you smoke a mild mixture, you will enjoy it. If you belong to the younger generation, go and see what an older one conceives you as, and be warned.

"Marchand d'Amour," at the Film Society
"Anne-Marie," at the Curzon

For its eighty-eighth performance, concluding its eleventh season, the Film Society showed a French picture, *Marchand d'Amour*, directed by Edmond Greville, the Englishman who made *Remous* in France and is now making *Gipsy Melody* in England. To the Film Society he is "Monsieur Greville," and it is true that his work, which is distinctive and arresting, is also "definitely French." His use of sound, his sense of tragedy, his attitude to sex are as fresh, conspicuous and personal in this story of the cinema as they were in that sombre and exciting drama of jealousy and impotence which seems to have convinced Elstree that his was a bilingual name to conjure with. In both films he got exactly the co-operation he required from an able actor, Jean Galland, whose lantern-jawed, intelligent face closely resembles that of a greater dramatic artist of another kind, Juan Belmonte. But in *Marchand d'Amour* his own scenario lacks full conviction, and the direction sometimes oversteps itself in subtle short-cuts and obliquities. This gives the film an air of pretention which, as plain commercial cinema, it should have been content to avoid. Even so, the emphatic maturity of Greville's

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style, the frankness and force of observation in his work, set him apart from the makers of standardised story-films here, in Hollywood, or in France, and one awaits his future productions with interest. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of Raymond Bernard, if we are to judge by his treatment of a scenario by the author of *Vol de Nuit*, which was surely not as insipid as the "film of adventure, love, romance and comradeship" he has made of it. I admit that as male lead Pierre Richard-Willm would stump the most talented director, but I still believe that Annabella could, at a pinch, improve on her performance in *Veille d'Armes* and in this film. It would have to be a very big pinch: she *will* pout like a pillar-box to express girlish emotion, and I regretfully take leave to doubt that five French airmen, however gay, would have bothered with her. Why so many aces? Pleasant fellows —but they could not give the film what it needed: something besides exquisite photography.

"These Three" at the Leicester Square Theatre

These Three is a sultry and admirable film which concerns, pretty intimately, six or seven people: a nice young man, two suffering young women (both beautiful and both schoolmarms), a detestable female brat, her blubbering victim, and her pompous dupe of a grandmother. It is also, of course, a triangle picture (hence the title), and of the slightly less usual variety—one man, two women—because that is about as near as the prim cinema camera can get to the reputedly odder and more ticklish subject of the original play, *The Children's Hour*. Lillian Hellman, who wrote that piece, was asked by the movie people to refurbish it for the great, right-thinking public of the screen: an almost unprecedented stroke of intelligence on their part that has had the most heartening result—for the authoress has made a very good job of the film. The tangle of lies, cruelties and misunderstandings caused by the unscrupulous venom and ingenuity —shall we say "feminine intuition"?—of just one little girl is presented forcibly and credibly, if we note that the skeins of grown-up emotion were there awaiting her detestable, interfering claws, ready to be twisted into a taut and unpleasant cat's cradle. Her elders frequently murmur that familiar talkie lament: "Words are no longer any use, there are no words left!" and for once—such is the sincerity of the film—we are inclined to believe them. Their predicament is shown to be genuine, and whereas gallantry on the movies regularly consists of a steadfast resolution to see no farther than the nose so bravely cut off to spite the face, in this case the inevitable if somewhat overproof distress of three hearts with but a single desire is plausible and often truly moving. This effect—and in American films it is extremely rare—is owed in part to Miss Hellman but principally to the impressive acting of Bonita Granville and Marcia Mae Jones, as bully and victim, and to the excellent performances of the Misses Oberon and Hopkins, as the loved and the loser of the affable Joel McCrea.

"Lysistrata" at the Ballet Club

Having seen *Lysistrata* acted at the Gate, our wives and sweethearts now have the lesson repeated by Madame Rambert's admirable dancers. Whether the movement for applying in England this sanction is being successful we have no means of knowing. The ballet, designed by Mr. Antony Tudor, to music by Prokoviev, has a gay but rather disconnected decor by Mr. William Chappell. On Sunday the principal part was danced by Miss Fontane, a "guest" from Sadler's Wells. She is the most promising of English dancers, but she seems to lack the sense of comedy required for this role. More satisfactory was a performance of the Mephisto Valse with a dazzling choreography by Mr. Frederick Ashton, and a most imaginative decor by Miss Sophie Fedorovitch. Miss Elizabeth Schooling danced Marguerite with imagination as well as great accomplishment. It is also always a pleasure to see Miss Maude Lloyd, Mr. Ashton, Mr. Gore, Mr. Staff and Mr. Laing. And we would recommend even the blind to visit the Ballet Club to hear Mr. Lynch's brilliant playing of the pianoforte.

Furniture by Seven Architects. At Heal's

It was admirably enterprising of Messrs. Heal to persuade seven architects to design furniture for a series of rooms. But the results are not for the most part very felicitous. The "Ghastly Good Taste"—to use Mr. Betjeman's phrase—which a few years ago was leading our more educated architects into sterile imitations of Georgian work is now shackling them in their use of the modern or functionalist style. These rooms seem cells designed for the more important officials in a totalitarian state—dour, lifeless and utterly unimaginative. The furniture is, but does not look, comfortable. And while contemporary painters have developed an unprecedented audacity in the use of colour, the modern architect is frightened of employing more than one colour in one room. Marcel Breuer's bookcases are notably good, his armchair more notably hideous. Pear and Indian laurel are gloomy woods better left unexploited. Far the best things in the exhibition are Mr. Christopher Nicholson's garden chairs, which we hope may soon be mass-produced at a reasonable price. May we suggest to Messrs. Heal that the next time they attempt so interesting an experiment they persuade painters to collaborate with the architects?

Anthony Devas at Cooling's Gallery

When asked whom he would recommend as a portrait-painter, the art-critic finds it difficult to answer anything but "Augustus John": and he commands higher fees than most inquirers can afford. With this exception, it seems that the better a painter is, the less able—or the less inclined—he shows himself to produce what is wanted from a portrait-painter. Even if he hits upon a "good likeness," it is likely to be exceedingly unflattering. In these circumstances we prophesy a most successful career for Mr. Anthony Devas. His exhibition shows that he has passed through the necessary discipline of composing in three dimensions. He has extreme charm in colour and handling, and his portraits have the air of being likenesses which the sitter can contemplate without humiliation. His water colours and drawings show great accomplishment—he is an eclectic who has evidently looked at Forain as well as at Matisse and all the moderns. Some of the interiors in this exhibition are enchanting pictures. If you want a portrait, you are recommended to go quickly to Messrs. Cooling's at the top of Bond Street, and see this show. In a few years Mr. Devas will probably be monopolised by millionaires.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, May 1st—
- "Hay Fever," Tavistock Little Theatre, 36, Tavistock Place.

SATURDAY, May 2nd—
- Two Films. "Men and Jobs" and "War is Hell," Cambridge Theatre, 2.30, 5.30 and 8.30. Also on May 3rd, at 5.30 and 8.15.

SUNDAY, May 3rd—
- Prof. F. Aveling on "The Christian Theory of the Human Will," Conway Hall, 11.
- North London Film Society, Monseigneur Cinema, 2.15.
- "Vom Lieben und Lachen," Arts Theatre, 2.30 and 8.30.
- Dorothy Woodman on "Arming for War," Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, 7.30.

MONDAY, May 4th—
- Royal Academy Summer Show, Burlington House.
- Films illustrating "The History of the Film, 1896-1916," Everyman Cinema, Hampstead.
- "Ah Wilderness," Westminster Theatre.

TUESDAY, May 5th—
- Gerald Heard on "The Organisation of Active Pacifism," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- "Peer Gynt," in its entirety, Sadler's Wells, 5.30.
- "Bees on the Boat Deck," Lyric Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, May 6th—
- Luncheon organised by the Howard League for Penal Reform. Miss Madeleine Symons, J.P. on "The Report of the Social Services Commission," Comedy Restaurant, 1. Tickets (2*s.* 6*d.*) obtainable at the door.
- Sir Bernard Pares on "Impressions of Moscow in January, 1936," Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, 8.

THURSDAY, May 7th—
- British Institute of Philosophical Studies. Prof. Ernest Barker on "The Romantic Factor in Modern Politics," University College, Gower Street, 5.45.
- G. T. Garratt on "The Betrayal of Abyssinia," Livingstone Hall, Broadway, 8.
- Public Meeting and Demonstration on "Imperialism and Freedom in India." Speeches by Sir Stafford Cripps, Prof. H. J. Laski and others, Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, 8.15.

FRIDAY, May 8th—
- Demonstration organised by the League of Nations Union. Stop the War in Abyssinia and Prevent War in Western Europe. Speeches by Lord Lytton, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Major Attlee, and Miss Eleanor Rathbone, Albert Hall, 8.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

When I was about sixteen I was taken to an appalling fake Nativity Play, which I fancy is sometimes still produced, called *Eager Heart*, and I simply hated it. What has brought it back incongruously to my mind is reading *Our Marie* (*Marie Lloyd*), *A Biography by Naomi Jacob* (Hutchinson, 18*s*.). *Eager Heart* made me extremely uncomfortable by its falsity and aestheticism and yearnings, but shortly afterwards, when I was taken to the old Oxford Music Hall and saw Marie Lloyd, I didn't like her either. I was not old enough to face her paint and feathers and to hear jokes made in public about sex. Shortly afterwards I went to the Palace and became a Maud Allan fan, an aberration which I don't regret since it led on rapidly to Genée, Mordkin, Nijinsky and the Russian Ballet. But for a few months there seemed to be a sort of moral virtue attached to Miss Allan's bare feet which did not extend to ladies who wore shoes. However, it was by sitting through the Palace programme in order to see her dancing to Chopin's Funeral March that I came to enjoy music halls. It is painful to think of wasted opportunities. During my adolescent years Marie Lloyd was singing *Wink The Other Eye*, *Keep Off the Grass*, and *Twiggez Vous?* Unfortunately I had not the slightest desire to hear her. I was not interested in winks, or grass and did not twig. I would give a lot to hear her songs now. I saw her two or three times when I was older, always at the Oxford, and heard one or two of her most audacious songs, and once saw her very close sitting in a car outside the stage door when I took a short cut into Oxford Street. She was superb, like an overpoweringly large exuberant pink hyacinth.

* * *

Marie Lloyd was the idol of the costers, barmen, and van drivers of London, and with good reason, for she sprang from the slums of Hoxton and had the terrific vitality and love of the coarse texture of life that the London slums produce. From those mean and overcrowded streets, from that sterile poverty-stricken stony soil, among a hundred weedy and stunted blossoms, there are always a few of unparalleled robustness and magnificence. The Wood family had this riotous strength. Marie the eldest of the girls had genius as well. Her humour, her coarseness, her outbursts of fury and sudden recoveries from it, her smutty jokes and smartness, her tremendous generosity, her sentimentality over others and absence of sentimentality about herself, made her a sort of goddess of the Cockney vices and the Cockney virtues. The Woods were a large family. Her father, a skilled craftsman, who is still alive and still likes his little daily flutter on the turf, invented the yellow centres to artificial daisies and put in his spare time as a waiter, being popular among the guests at local junketings and banquets. Marie (then Tilly Wood) used to take her little sisters to the cemetery where they would join in the funerals for the emotional luxury of weeping real tears and enacting grief. "On a good day we saw as many as seven or eight," one of her sisters recollects. And once when there were a few pennies to spend and Alice suggested buying sweets, Marie exclaimed:

> Anyone can buy sweets. Let's buy some gin.

They did so and they found it good. A few years later she was "forever racing about the streets after the boys and her mother worried terribly." Then she made her first appearance at a concert at the City Temple singing *Throw the bottle down and never drink again*, which was afterwards worked up into a sketch on the evils of drink which she acted with Alice, who gave a solo recitation:

> I am a kitten, just six months old,
> A reg-u-lar beauty I've often been told.
> They were the Fairy Bell Minstrels, aged about nine and eleven.

* * *

What is particularly attractive about Marie Lloyd is that spiritually she never really left Hoxton and never wanted to leave her own people. Miss Jacob estimates that she made about a quarter of a million pounds in about thirty years, but she gave it away as fast as she made it, showering picture hats, suits, bottles of champagne and five pound notes in all directions. This biography is filled with instances of her generosity especially to struggling music-hall artists whom she helped with advice and sympathy and influence as well as with money. She was not, however, a discriminating woman.

> The trouble with Marie was that she was always nice to people who didn't matter a hoot one way or the other. People who just liked to sponge on her, who made use of her in every way, always got a welcome from her.

She kept open house for them, a paradise in which every cupboard and corner was kept spotlessly clean, while there were no mealtimes—since food and drink were always being consumed. Someone or other was always eating winkles or whelks or tripe, or a pound of steak or drinking a quart of bitter out of a jug or finishing off a bottle of the bubbly. She loved giving, she loved flattery and she loved clothes. "What's the matter with a little bit of parsley round the dish?" as she said when advising a friend about the choice of a nightdress. So her clothes were terrific. She would go off in them to Ascot and embarrass her escort by bringing three of her dowdiest old female friends with her as a last-minute act of kindness.

* * *

Miss Jacob suggests that she had an inferiority complex, which made her prefer the manners and habits of her own class. Like all cockneys she loathed anything which seemed like "side" or conscious superiority. On one occasion when she was taking her sister Daisy for a drive in her car, a small boy dashed in front of it and was nearly run over. Marie, white with fear, yelled out: "You little b . . . You want a damned good hiding." Daisy, always "a little lady,"

> leaned out of the car, shook her finger at the child saying: "Oh you naughty, naughty little boy." Marie turned on her with a look of righteous indignation and demanded: "And what the Hell's the matter with you, Mrs. Bloody Munro?"

On the other hand, if the superiority were of a sort which she could appreciate, Marie Lloyd's attitude was very different. For example, her admiration of Dan Leno was so great that she was "almost shy" in his presence. The inferiority complex made it impossible for her to play second fiddle to anyone else and thus restricted the field of her art. She was only successful when she appeared alone, and refused to play in revue or in sketches. She did appear in pantomime but was a failure in it, though one of her most characteristic efforts must have been when, after kneeling down to say her prayers as Little Red Riding Hood, she looked under the bed, and not finding the chamber-pot, continued her search in all the corners of Drury Lane stage. She was nearly dismissed from the cast on this occasion and this simple subject was always getting her into hot water with the guardians of public delicacy and morals. The victory, however, was invariably with her. When one vegetable was banned from a song another vegetable could be found to replace it with devastating effect, and once she put the manager of a Scottish hotel through a terrible questionnaire as to the nature of pea-soup, ending with an apology: "Oh, I beg your pardon, my mistake. Only next time use three peas and damn the expense."

* * *

It was not merely her type of joke that appealed to her audience but her absolute intimacy with them. She had trouble with an enormous picture hat before going on and flew into a fury with the stage manager, who said: "I wonder you wear it if it's going to worry you." On the stage, however, when it fell over one eye, she pulled it off and threw it away, saying: "It's all his fault. That stage manager of yours.

He made me nervous of the thing before I came on." Miss Jacob's biography is a badly written book full of digressions about the gifts of Marie's brothers and sisters—Alice was almost as great a star in America as Marie was in England—but in spite of sentimentality and gush, I have enjoyed it because it does make Marie Lloyd a living woman and is infused with some of her vitality. DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

The Burning Cactus. By STEPHEN SPENDER. *Faber and Faber.* 7s. 6d.
The World Over. By EDITH WHARTON. *Appleton.* 7s. 6d.
Studs Lonigan. By JAMES FARRELL. *Constable.* 8s. 6d.
In Dubious Battle. By JOHN STEINBECK. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
London's Burning. By BARBARA WOOTTON. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.
Panic Among Puritans. By JAMES LAVER. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

Few literary forms are so tantalising as the short story. At one time or another, every novelist and poet has been captivated by its possibilities; but, after a painful struggle, most writers have been very glad to give up a task that threatened to have the same calamitous effect upon their faculty of literary equilibrium as the Toad's innocent query upon the Centipede. A novel, to some extent, can take care of itself. Once under way, it will glide, roll or lumber along, gathering speed as it accumulates bulk. The short story, however, demands constant attention. No sooner has it been started—and that alone is usually difficult enough—than the time has come to think of bringing it to an appropriate close. If the awkwardness of the form needs illustration, we have only to turn to the work of the average English or American short-story writer. A well-balanced and readable story is remarkably rare. For some stories are all beginning—brilliant preludes to a situation that fails to develop; some all middle—large floating masses of observation or reflection, unsupported by any kind of literary substructure; some all ending—stories that consist chiefly of a "point," of a brilliant last paragraph, suspended in the void, like the visible sting of an invisible insect.

Mr. Stephen Spender's short stories—five of them, collected in a volume entitled *The Burning Cactus*—may be assigned to the second group. Beginning and end are weak or vague; the main part of the narrative is loose in outline, laggard in movement, frequently rather hazy in execution; while the style very often tends to clumsiness, since individual sentences carry a weight of meaning heavier than they can bear. Mr. Spender is an admirer and a discriminating critic of Henry James; but one is bound to add that the lesson of the master would not appear to have penetrated very deep. Nowhere, among the tales collected in *The Burning Cactus*, do we enjoy that feeling of completeness, that aesthetic zest, that extraordinary gift of satirical portraiture which we appreciate, even at the third or fourth reading, in *Daisy Miller*, *The Aspern Papers*, *A Bundle of Letters* or in James's wonderful study of adolescent unhappiness and cosmopolitan rascality, *The Pupil*. James's stories leave us with a sense of finality. They create their own atmosphere, more or less rarefied; their own light, hard and matter-of-fact, or mysterious and dim; they introduce the reader to a separate universe and persuade him that the personages he encounters are native to that world. Mr. Spender's stories, on the other hand, are notes for fiction, compiled by a writer of unusual taste and wide literary sensitiveness. Mr. Spender, I am afraid, is *not* a story-teller; and *The Cousins*, one of the most ambitious and complicated stories of the entire collection, is also the shadowiest and most inconclusive; for Mr. Spender, though he tries hard, never manages to clothe the conflict of ideas and civilisations that supplies his theme in the objectivity that alone could lend it interest.

His descriptive style is particularly infelicitous. Mr. Spender, as we all know, is an accomplished poet; but, in his stories, he has an extremely bad habit of writing bastard poetic prose. Take, for example, this picture of a Viennese suburb just before the assassination of Dollfüss:

> . . . In the spring of 1934 the streets were often shuttered with the darkness of the police vans carrying political offenders to their trial.

Or this account of an attempt to blow up the Vice-Chancellor:

> Then we noticed in the same direction a haze of blue smoke as if from a small abruptly lit bonfire of wet leaves. There was a mild disturbance amongst the crowd near the church. The full goblet of interest hung up before the Vice-Chancellor became, as it were tilted, and a few drops of the drink fell on to the pavement. That was all.

But much better than *Two Deaths* (from which these passages are quoted), *The Cousins*, or the story which gives its title to the volume, is *By the Lake*. Here is something of the charm and pathos of an early love-affair—something of the bewilderment that accompanies the invert's first discovery that he is not as other men.

Mr. Spender's stories are stimulating but unsatisfactory; Mrs. Wharton's by comparison refreshingly competent; yet not quite up to the standard of the novels that have established her claim to be remembered as a minor master of early twentieth-century fiction. Here again, as in *The House of Mirth*, *The Custom of the Country*, *The Glimpses of the Moon* and *Twilight Sleep*, is the tone of dry worldliness—the cynical appreciation of mundane values—that makes everything Mrs. Wharton writes so insidiously readable. Thus, *Charm Incorporated* describes one of those amiable leech-like Russian refugee families who bully, blackmail or imperceptibly edge their way into English or American upper or upper-middle class life. *Pomegranate Seed* is an ingenious ghost story; *Permanent Wave*, the brilliant and brutal portrait of a woman whose vagueness is only equalled by her fatuity, and whose plans of elopement are held up because she cannot distinguish between to-day and to-morrow. But *Roman Fever*, I think, is the best story in the book. Two middle-aged American ladies sit on the terrace of a restaurant overlooking the Roman Forum. They review their youth. They go back to a time when Rome was a very different place. They recapture a period when they were both in love with the same fascinating young man. One of them discovers an unsuspected relationship.

Mrs. Wharton belongs to a tradition of American life that has now almost disappeared; both Mr. Farrell and Mr. Steinbeck reflect the Americanism of to-day and are the products of a world at once more interesting—because it is less Europeanised—and far more disturbing. *Studs Lonigan* consists of a trilogy of novels, republished for English consumption in a single volume. Full of violence, colour and excitement, it is a heavy but impressive work, that echoes with the bustle and feverish stir of crowded city streets. Like many other books of a similar type, it relies for its interest not so much on the personality of the hero himself as on the teeming contemporary background against which he moves. The son of a prosperous Irish house-painter, Studs is a restless, shiftless young man who finds it difficult to settle down in his father's business and is apt to wander off with his pool-room acquaintances on terrific "benders," from which he returns very much the worse for wear, with a dim hankering for the consolations administered by the Roman Catholic Church. Chicago is the scene of his escapades. Towards the end of the third volume, he contracts pneumonia; and, on the last page, Studs dies, leaving behind him an unborn illegitimate child, a drunken, embittered father, a lacrymose religious mother and the sentimental, foolish mistress who is bearing his child.

In Dubious Battle is the story of a strike. I did not enjoy Mr. Steinbeck's previous novel, *Tortilla Flat*; but his new book is one of the best novels of social conflict I have yet read. American proletarian literature is seldom digestible; but *In Dubious Battle* is a well-written and unpretentious story, all the more interesting because it lacks the usual touch of violent *parti pris*. This is an account of how two professional Communist agents go down to foment a strike among the Californian apple-pickers. They succeed; but the strike collapses for want of adequate financial backing; and Tim comes to a violent and bloody end. Mr. Steinbeck gives us a convincing account of the two enthusiasts and of the feeling, half-romantic, that grows up between them.

Prophecy and fashionable whimsy conclude the list. *London's Burning* is an ambitious, but not very successful, vision of London in 1940, with a thread of personal sentiment running through the lurid drama of bloodshed and civil strife. *Panic among Puritans* is not likely to rouse a hubbub of enthusiasm among highbrows; but, no doubt, it will give a great deal of innocent entertainment to readers who appreciate the more sophisticated forms of modern whimsy. Once again, the Olympian gods return to earth. It is arguable that they have already made the journey rather too often, and that they have seldom made it to really witty effect; but Mr. Laver does his best with familiar material—his satire is brisk and lively, if a little thin. Mr. Laver's chief drawback is a tendency to archness. One day he should try his hand at a serious book. PETER QUENNELL

THE MAD MONARCH

George III. By J. D. GRIFFITH DAVIES. *Nicholson and Watson.* 21*s.*

Men who combine good intentions with poor execution make perhaps the unhappiest figures in history. Harshly treated in his lifetime, George III has since been magnified by liberal historians into a monster whose obstinacy provoked one civil war (with the English in America) and nearly added another on his own doorstep. The pendulum is now swinging back, however, and Mr. Davies' study is an avowed attempt at correction. It is a book that one would like to recommend; Mr. Davies writes modestly and with evident enjoyment, and there is a need for the work he planned to do. His *George III* will perhaps serve some purpose as a popular sketch for the superficial reader, but apart from that it is unfortunately much too unreliable to be of more than passing interest.

It is open to the historian either to undertake some original research, or to synthesise the best available research in a study of the balance and movement and characteristic life of a culture. Mr. Davies has done neither of these things. He has reshuffled the cards, but he is still using the same old pack. It is, indeed, only in moral colouring that he differs from the text-books he would like to supersede.

There can be no understanding of George III without a preliminary grasp of the extremely complex political system that he inherited. That system has been fully examined by Professor Namier in the course of his brilliant research on the Newcastle papers, to which all students of the period must be greatly indebted, and it is hard to understand why Mr. Davies has (apparently) ignored this. He talks glibly of "Whigs" and "Tories" as if they were at that time defined and opposed parties, and he seems to believe that Pitt and Newcastle were leading the same "Whig" party. In a typically misleading passage he says of George's first meeting with Parliament:

> His Whig ministers sat uneasily in their seats. The Speech from the Throne, originally drafted by Hardwicke and transmitted to the King by Newcastle, had been tampered with. . . . Newcastle recognised in an instant Bute's hand in those words. To Hardwicke he said, "it denotes the author to all the world."

The persistent suggestion is that Newcastle was surprised. In fact he had known of the interpolation two days before, from Bute himself. His comment to Hardwicke was written before Parliament met. Moreover he had been negotiating with Bute some time before George's accession, and was quite aware of the part Bute was to play. In general, Newcastle was much more alive to danger, which was almost an obsession with him, and less forceful and powerful than Mr. Davies recognises.

Another serious fault is the omission of George's extraordinary letters to Bute before his accession, a correspondence curiously reminiscent of a school-girl addressing her hockey-mistress. It is obvious that both men were the victims of precepts and maxims abstracted from reality; in the stress of application their very inflexibility led them to greater excesses than a more rounded personality would find necessary. It is essentially ironical that George, horrified by the wickedness of his contemporaries, should have had to employ Henry Fox, Sandwich and Dashwood to escape from the high-handed Pitt and the nervous, rambling incompetence of Newcastle. But this is History, at which no one laughs, and Mr. Davies' humour is confined to naive exclamation marks. He reproaches Wilkes for not realising that his "profligacy" alienated him at the outset from the Court, in face of the fact that one of Wilkes's elders in sin was Chancellor of the Exchequer, while another—Sandwich—led the Government attack on Wilkes for blasphemy at the same time that he himself was expelled from a club for—blasphemy. This is sheer farce, and cannot be treated otherwise.

The case of Wilkes is a pitfall for historians, and Mr. Davies brings to it neither the knowledge nor the impartiality that is needed. On p. 73 he writes: "It happened that the Government had in its possession" an obscene work printed by Wilkes, but he omits to describe the interesting way in which "it happened." The strange intrigues of Hardwicke to save his son are entirely omitted, and Mr. Davies is too eager throughout to score doubtful points off Wilkes. It is at least questionable whether it is in the character of a "cheap demagogue" and "dirty blasphemer" to have the shrewd, dry wit which Wilkes undoubtedly possessed; and the fact remains that, with all his faults, Wilkes was at any rate *infected* with the ideas that finally emerged from this comic and chaotic period of political transition.

Mr. Davies has made a brave attempt to rehabilitate the stiff, backward boy whose good intentions, domestic virtue and personal courage ended in disappointment and insanity. It is his misfortune that, in the absence of a broad basis of fact, he is like a man manœuvring on a sixpence. Whenever he moves far in any direction a progressive distortion appears. Names come and go, with an epithet or two attached, but the whole perspective is lost. In a book so regally priced this is not good enough, and a number of misprints do nothing to help.

A. DESMOND HAWKINS

IS ROOSEVELT A JEFFERSONIAN?

The Living Jefferson. By JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS. *Scribners.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The Jeffersonian Tradition in American Democracy. By CHARLES WILTSE. *Chapel Hill.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Many of the most eminent of British and American historians have been party politicians, and the art of mud-slinging acquired on the hustings has not always been discarded in the lecture-room. Roundhead and Cavalier, Whig and Tory, Republican and Democrat drape themselves in a thin disguise of historical objectivity and proceed to assail one another with as much acrimony as last month's by-election candidates. No one has suffered more from this practice than Thomas Jefferson. Political passion has been partly successful in withholding from him an undisputed place alongside Washington in the gallery of American heroes. Mr. F. W. Hirst has said that a perusal of the literature on the subject led him to suppose that whenever a dyspeptic author has a grudge against Jefferson he relieves his feelings by writing a Life. In this country perhaps the most well-known picture of him is contained in F. S. Oliver's essay on Alexander Hamilton. Oliver's method was to use an historical treatise in order to justify his own intolerant contempt for his fellow human-beings. Jefferson, who believed in the inherent goodness and trustworthiness of his fellow-creatures, had, therefore, to be represented as a philosophical windbag, eager only to turn each new gust of popular opinion to his own advantage. Both these books are free from so gross a

The Root and the Flower

How many readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION have, perhaps in their early days, rejoiced in the flower of the May Day demonstration, especially that May Day demonstration ten years ago, on the eve of the General Strike. "To be young was very heaven . . . and forth the banners go . . ." Since then it has been a bit harder. We have found the roots of the struggle—and quarrelled about them too. The flower, however, springs from the roots and this novel (for we are a business, not leader writers) by John Sommerfield tells us something of these roots. The author has protested against an "advance" review that his is a *novel* not a propaganda thesis. But he must not mind if we say that the strength of it comes from his immersion in the rough waters of vital class and national conflicts. This return to real things is the hope of British literature. It is a return to the revolutionary tradition, the social awareness, of the great British writers. One of the great troubles of modern "Left" publishers is to find the novel which does this and yet which escapes from the turgidity, formlessness, and self-conscious propagandism that chases the minds of the young authors who describe the class struggle in terms of lavatory bowls. Sommerfield escapes this and gives us both sides of the—what shall we call it?—£3 line: the dignity of organised labour, the silliness of unorganised parasitism—worked out not as a formula but in character.

Our opinion is borne out by Ralph Wright, writing in last Wednesday's *Daily Worker*. "Here everything is alive and in a ferment. And here as well, because man is no longer seen as an individual in a vacuum, a wretched victim squirming all alone, there is strength and hope. The book is interesting technically . . . *May Day* is a genuine Communist novel, and such books still are rather rare in England." (*May Day* 7/6)

Again on the point of the social background to literature, Cecil Day Lewis has some interesting things to say in his introduction to *Poems of Strife* by Julius Lipton. You really can afford to read this and these poems ("they show the promise of his becoming a real revolutionary poet"); the cost is 1*s.* (or 5*s* cloth, signed). [Item: Number 5 of *The Eye* is ready.]

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political prejudice. Both, however, are described by their publishers as "timely," which seems to mean that they have been written with an eye on the next Presidential election. In a final chapter, Mr. Adams flays President Roosevelt with a vindictiveness which he studiously avoids when dealing with Hamilton. The President, however, may comfort himself with the knowledge that Mr. Wiltse asserts with equal conviction that he is a worthy standard-bearer of Jeffersonian principles.

It is not easy to discover the grounds for this controversy that still rages around Jefferson's name. Perhaps one explanation may be found in the fact that Hamilton and Jefferson stand out far more clearly than Pitt and Fox or Disraeli and Gladstone as the representatives of the clash between Conservatism and Liberalism. Hamilton believed that the right to govern should be restricted to "the rich, the wise and the good"; Jefferson wished to enlist the small man in the service of the state. Hamilton believed in heredity; Jefferson in environment. Hamilton despised the people and championed the interests of property with all the fervour of a self-made man. Such an outlook offended every principle in Jefferson's creed. For him the independent farmer in the West offered the best hope for a new America. He feared the growth of a financial oligarchy in the coastal cities who would pay little attention to his interests. Yet his liberal instincts were based on no narrow provincialism. He opposed Sedition laws in America when Pitt was enforcing them in England. He passed a Bill for religious toleration in the Virginian Legislature at the time when Fox was fighting a losing battle in the same cause in the British House of Commons. He espoused the cause of education with a warmth which Bentham himself never surpassed. He drew up a scheme for the abolition of slavery seventy years before Lincoln made his famous proclamation. The consuming passion of his life, however, was to prevent the freedom which the common man had fought for during the war from being filched from him by New York financiers or even Virginian landowners. In his day the chief threat to the individual came from the tyranny of the state. To-day a worse threat comes from the tyranny of the capitalist, and Mr. Wiltse insists with some justification that if we are to speak of a living Jefferson we must accept the social as well as the individualist implications of his philosophy. Mr. Adams, on the other hand, clings rigidly to the individualist interpretation. "Economic security," no less than "national regeneration," must be recognised as a myth spread abroad to gull the public, and Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia and Roosevelt America must all be placed together under the same ban. According to this view, Jefferson's principles can only be carried out successfully in an agrarian society. Applied to a civilisation predominantly proletarian they mean freedom for the capitalist and subservience for the individual. A belief in the worth of the individual and the supreme purpose of securing his happiness was the main item in Jefferson's faith; it was natural that in his age such a principle gave rise to a desire to curb the rights of the executive. With the growth of a more serious menace it is arguable that he would have changed his tactics and it is hardly likely that he would have condemned Roosevelt's use of the power of the state to make a few breaches in the ramparts of American capitalism. MICHAEL FOOT

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OLD NICK

Machiavelli and His Times. By D. ERSKINE MUIR. *Heinemann.* 10s. 6d.

When Signor Mussolini was a candidate for a doctorate he chose *The Prince* of Machiavelli as the subject of his thesis. When Marx was in the same position he wrote about Epicurus. There ought to be a moral somewhere in that. Perhaps it has something to do with the ill-usage that both Epicurus and Machiavelli have suffered at the hands of posterity. Machiavelli's posthumous disrepute is due to an odd variety of causes. The Italian courtiers of Catharine de'Medici were unpopular in France, so the good name of the Florentine foreign secretary was damaged. Italians were subtle and immoral foreigners to the Elizabethans, so a Machiavelli was evolved for stage purposes who merged easily with the Senecan tyrant and later was strangely amalgamated with the politick Jesuit. As a consequence of this, all the history that anyone can remember about Machiavelli is that he was a clever but bad man who said that the end justified the means and was a cause of Pope Borgia who poisoned people at dinner with trick rings and was a very bad thing.

The Machiavellian myth in English on which Professor Praz remains the authority is only spasmodically attacked by Dr. Muir. But his attacks are very effective. "To sup with the Pope is reckoned a severe penalty," wrote an ambassador, going on to say that as Alexander Borgia was an abstemious man "the Pope has but one dish at his supper although there is plenty of that one." Dr. Muir further spoils the poison theory by pointing out that the existing recipes would have acted immediately as emetics. He has, however, no illusions about the Borgias. "Public opinion felt that the Holy Father had gone too far in taking his guests after dinner to watch the behaviour of the stallions in the stables, and that it was clearly vulgar to fill the bosoms of the ladies' very low-necked gowns by cramming sweetmeats down them."

Dr. Muir's first aim has been to make a picture of the political condition of the Italy in which Machiavelli lived and wrote. This he has done admirably. We are given well-documented accounts of the lives and ambitions of Savonarola and Cesare Borgia. Dr. Muir can write vividly without falling into drunken magniloquence and can manage large quantities of information without forcing it all to fit into a theory. As he tells the story of Machiavelli's life the true character of the man detaches itself from the myth, and *The Prince* becomes less surprising than its reputation.

Machiavelli emerges as a parochial patriot with democratic leanings living in times when the wealth of his beloved Florence was a constant temptation to every warlord. His precepts on government, diplomacy, and war are merely rationalisations of the most successful practice of his time. His advice to Florence seems to have been consistently sensible, and his failures were probably not his fault. The man who appears in these pages is no cynical anti-Christian philosopher, but a perfect civil servant turned a little sour through losing his job. His recommendation of occasional complete ruthlessness as a method of maintaining authority has been in practice accepted by humane rulers. It is impossible to justify and find pretty motives for all the actions of any Government and it is the English desire to do so which has won us our reputation abroad for hypocrisy. Machiavelli and his friend, Guicciardini, held the opposing doctrines of the "sinfulness" and the "perfectibility" of mankind. Though Guicciardini's theory has had the best of the debate amongst philosophers, Machiavelli's view that: "It is hard to live in the world, and to

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act according to the rule of God, and he who wishes to act according to God will not be able to fit in with the customs of the world," seems to be accepted by more practitioners.

Those who are interested in the early forms of the doctrine of the omnipotent State, who are connoisseurs of constitutions, or who mourn the passing of the engaging condottieri, will find much to interest them here.

Machiavelli as a writer has been somewhat neglected. His story of the Marriage of Belphegor translated into English in 1647 as The Divell a Married Man compares well with Mr. John Collier's diabolic tales. If his comedy *Mandragola* could be got past the censor it would repay revival.

The only complaint which can be made against Dr. Muir is that he is over partial to his subject. In spite of the care with which he has placed Machiavelli in historical perspective he seems to wish to endorse some of his theories *sub specie aeternitatis*. "When we see a State which uses force against its members we are tempted to believe that it is founded on force, and we do not see this is mistaken; the majority are behind it, and are in agreement with the coercion of a minority." Statements like this cry out for contradiction.

FREDERICK LAWS

MORE OF ME

Born for Trouble. By MARGUERITE HARRISON. *Gollancz.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

A psychologist should have reviewed this book: it is yet another of those "case histories" of which, in recent months, the aristocracy of American journalism have unburdened themselves to the delight of an edacious and now prodigally regaled public. This is by no means the least personal, or, for that matter, the least exciting, of such histories.

Born for Trouble is full of faults. Naive—Mrs. Harrison, on page 210 of a book that betrays no trace of intellectual feeling, writes of the first British labour delegation that visited the Soviet Union after the revolution: "I met all the members of the delegation during the first stages of our journey, but the only one I found at all congenial was Bertrand Russell. We naturally drifted together as we had much the same social background and intellectually had a great deal in common. . . ."—yes, naive; careless in writing and, in one important moment, in fact as well; too long, almost entirely devoid of essential dates, and stuffed with now fulfilled prophecies on the future of Europe that would carry weight if they were substantiated by contemporary documents, of which a number must be extant; vain, yes, and patronising. But, when all that has been said, as it must be said, here is the record of a courageous heart, of endurance in adversity, and of perpetual cheerfulness written by a woman with a sense of observation so highly developed that she can paint a scene of history with one or two insignificant details that would, in similar circumstances, have escaped the notice of most of us.

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Marguerite Harrison entered Germany in the days immediately after the Armistice, ostensibly as a correspondent of that great newspaper, the *Baltimore Sun*, in reality as an American "spy." She lived in Berlin in those early months when the seeds of National Socialism were pushing roots into a ground tilled by the war, were then fertilised from Versailles and later tended by the loving hands of Poincaré. She met, and now presents with admirable economy, the German leaders of those early years. In her long gallery of men and women Rathenau stands out with his remark that: "the Allies look on the war as a political happening. It is really a social upheaval, and it must be treated as such." Later, Mrs. Harrison went to Poland, interviewed Pilsudski at the Belvedere and finally slipped across the border into the unknown world of Soviet Russia, the first correspondent to see the birth pangs of a new society. She saw most of it from prison; and in her chapter on her experiences in the Lubianka and elsewhere she has produced a document of startling interest and reality. In the end the Cheka threw her out of the country.

She was not long away. A visit to the Far East, an unintentional crossing of the border into the Soviet Union, and she was arrested again. This time she got out by luck; returned to America; inspired Cooper and Shoedsack to make cinema history with the film called "Grass"; travelled with them through Persia while they made it; and then wondered if Fate had finished with her. And there she leaves us.

In this book Mrs. Harrison has done her share of "explaining away" the unhappy episode of herself and Mrs. Stan Harding, which at one time threatened to become an international *cause célèbre*. It is a pity that verifiable facts are not here presented with scrupulous accuracy: it is a pity too that she does not give a wholly objective account of the miserable affair; for, presented as she presents it, Mrs. Harrison weakens her case and makes it pretty clear that she does not feel any too comfortable about the matter herself. She protests a deal too much.

Future historians of the immediate post-war years in Germany would find this book more useful if it were provided with an index.

PHILIP JORDAN

THE BEGINNINGS OF KENYA

A Cuckoo in Kenya. By MAJOR W. R. FORAN, with Foreword by LORD CRANWORTH, M.C., and 120 photographs. *Hutchinson.* 18*s.*

Readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will not be eager to read about the founders of the now flourishing Race Club of Kenya Colony, nor about the "fine fellows" who, together with some undesirable characters, flocked there, mainly from South Africa, in the slump which about 1904 followed the picnic of the Boer War. But Major Foran's *Cuckoo in Kenya* is a document of British colonial history, none the less that its testimony is unwitting. The "white man's country" was never systematically planned. Officials from the Indian Service, slightly stiff and hostile, were forced to improvise elementary social services for a horde of immigrants, where provision had been made only for railway camps, Indian traders, and the little-known natives. Authority was reinforced by men like the admittedly inexperienced Major Foran—a cuckoo in the Police nest, he calls himself—and at one moment by a gang of Indian burglars, engaged without inquiry, as police. There was a dearth of maps and trained surveyors, and no preliminary survey of farms; "land was practically given away," on conditions which were "in no way irksome"—and, in fact, yielded a colossal unearned increment.

Such were the inauspicious beginnings of Kenya Colony that there very early grew up a real feud between the official caste, with its set social rules, and the very mixed crowd of interlopers, who might be pardoned for thinking that they owned the earth.

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By ROBERT ENGLAND, M.C., M.A.
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It is not fair to take Major Foran as typical of the latter group. Not many would show such a crude sense of humour, or such pride in boorish exploits—childish attempts some of them—to undermine the privileges of his official superiors in the course of his duty as a policeman. But he took the "Settler" side and repeats all the clichés of Settler opinion—about the benefits conferred on the lucky natives by their presence in this vigorous, marvellous young country; the hope of a new white dominion—if only notoriety-seeking cranks would leave it alone to develop without unsought publicity; the maliciousness of these same cranks in spreading the tale that settlers robbed the natives of their land.

Happily, as with others of his kind, Major Foran's reactions to reality were much better than his doctrine. He longed for a taste of "savage" warfare and tried to wangle at least one punitive expedition. Actual experience of the devastation of villages and burning of crops in the Kisii "rebellion" rather sickened him; the Kisii he believed had "tough luck," being "under the impression that the tribal surrender had been accepted and that no war would take place." From his own experience in court he also speaks strongly of the attitude of juries as a blot on East African justice.

The obviously vigorous demand for this sort of book, which of course has a seasoning of adventure, even of achievement, helps to make it a document. The clichés still rule in Clubland, and are no small part of "the colonial question."

W. M. MACMILLAN

"A PHENOMENON WHICH ONE SLAYS OR IS SLAIN BY . . ."

Hitler. A Biography. By KONRAD HEIDEN. *Constable.* 10s.

One of Hitler's greatest assets has been the inability of educated people to take him seriously; fortunately his biographers are beginning to do so. Herr Heiden clearly presents to us this formidable contradiction, this man of tearful hesitation and merciless decision, this shifty trickster who is yet so fanatically sincere. Herr Heiden's book works up to June 30th, 1934, as its climax, but its greatest justification lies in the history of Germany since that fearful week-end, when not only Röhm, the creator of the S.A., but also Gregor Strasser, the creator of North German National Socialism, were ruthlessly murdered. Events since the German troops re-entered the Rhineland this March provide, perhaps, the most eloquent illustration of Herr Heiden's perception. If "Hitler's ultimate goal is personal glorification," the March election campaign must have done something to satisfy him. Even the *Führer's* revealing reference to his own "sleep-walker's certainty" was anticipated by Herr Heiden's "sleep-walker and plan-maker."

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Herr Heiden rightly works with *Mein Kampf* at his elbow, for it is plainer every day that, far from shedding the doctrines of his youth, Adolf Hitler in power is steadfastly true to the principles of the prisoner of Landsberg. ". . . By sagacious and persistent use of propaganda, heaven itself may be presented to a people as hell, and, inversely, the most wretched existence as paradise" is written in *Mein Kampf*. No better illustration of this thesis in practice could be furnished than the so-called election of March 29th. Many people who were grumbling bitterly over low wages, high taxes and luxurious rulers on the 28th, and would do so again on the 30th, were hypnotised into Nazi rapture when it came to voting on the 29th. The importance of inculcating racial sense into the younger generation is richly stressed in *Mein Kampf*; if you meet an intelligent schoolboy in Germany to-day, and if he is not afraid to say so, he will tell you that school is very disappointing these days, because there is practically nothing to learn except racial theory, which is taught every day of the week.

If heaven may be presented as hell, Soviet Russia certainly is. *Mein Kampf* supplies the reason—Germany must destroy the Bolshevik state, because she needs Russian territory. "If to-day in Europe we talk of new territory and soil, we can in the first place have in mind only Russia and the border states subject to her." Far from observing that Hitler tends to be better than his word, people in England seem determined to be as blind to the deceptions of Nazi propaganda as the unfortunate Social Democrats once were in Germany; they are afraid to face the reality.

Very occasionally Herr Heiden is less than just. For instance, he deplores the *Führer's* taste in Party flags and badges, as if their gaudy mediocrity were not precisely such as to appeal to the masses, degraded as Hitler admittedly interprets them to be. As for Hitler's sincerity, Herr Heiden writes: "At the bottom of his heart he does not believe his own words." Is the truth not even more dangerous? Does not this type of hysterical mystic utterly convince himself of one thing at one moment, but of exactly the opposite at the next? His success up to date is certainly strengthening his conviction of his own greatness and of God's protection. Herr Heiden's warning is timely: "Hitler is not a man with whom a reasonable being concludes an agreement; he is a phenomenon which one slays or is slain by."

SHORTER NOTICES

Nansen Passport: Round the World on a Motor-Cycle. By I. S. K. SOBOLEFF. *Bell.* 12s. 6d.

As the title implies, Lieutenant Soboleff has devoted the bulk of this book to the story of his journey round the world; but in the opening chapters he tells us of his childhood and youth in Tsarist Russia, of his experiences in the army and at last, during the last disastrous White Campaign, with a Cossack regiment that was disbanded in Turkestan; whence he eventually reached Shanghai. Lieut. Soboleff writes so cheerfully and simply of his adventure across Asia, Europe and America, that the extent of his achievement is hidden. But those who know anything of jungle and desert travel will recognise how high it really was. He, as a White Russian, without an official country, travelled on a Nansen passport. At first he had difficulties in securing visas, but as his fame spread his way was made easy for him, till it became an almost royal progress.

Tunnellers: The Story of the Tunnelling Companies, Royal Engineers, during the World War. By CAPTAIN W. GRANT GRIEVE and BERNARD NEWMAN. *Jenkins.* 15s.

The Tunnellers of the Great War have waited long for their historian, but now that he has arrived he has done them proud. No better book dealing with a particular branch of the Service has appeared or could be conceived. It is full, explanatory and graphic, agreeable to read and impossible to forget. The authors open with the story of Norton Griffiths' fight for the establishment of companies of skilled miners under expert direction, and of the slow awakening of a fatuous G.H.Q.

Competition

Somebody sent us the other day a list of trades and professions in the United Kingdom, with the numbers engaged under each heading. A natural curiosity prompted us to look up " Tailors," and to our dismay we found that there were no less than 18,000! How could we hope to compete successfully with the other 17,999. It was poor consolation to see that there were nearly a quarter of a million Farmers, 39,000 Doctors, 59,000 Retail Grocers, 34,000 Butchers, and so on.

We sighed for a more exclusive calling. Why were we not one of the 4 Annatto Manufacturers (apparently a dye used for colouring cheese, etc.), or the 2 Zinc Roofing Manufacturers, or the 4 Fog Signal Manufacturers, or the 3 makers of Philosophical Instruments (whatever they may be), or better still, the Invalid Carriage Maker, who seems to have cornered his market completely.

But our disgruntled meditations were suddenly dispelled by the realisation that the members of every trade and profession in this long list had to wear clothes! The Doctors and the Diving Apparatus makers, the Builders and the Baize makers, the Nurses and the Night Light makers, the Publicans and Egg Powder manufacturers—they all had to be clothed. 18,000 Tailors weren't so many after all, in fact there hardly seemed enough to go round!

We carried our newly-found optimism a step farther. How many of these 18,000 Tailors offered really personal service? How many, or how few, did all the measuring, cutting and fitting themselves? Surely only a small percentage kept their overheads down by having no expensive shop-front or West-end premises to pay for, and how few asked all their customers to pay cash?

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INDIA

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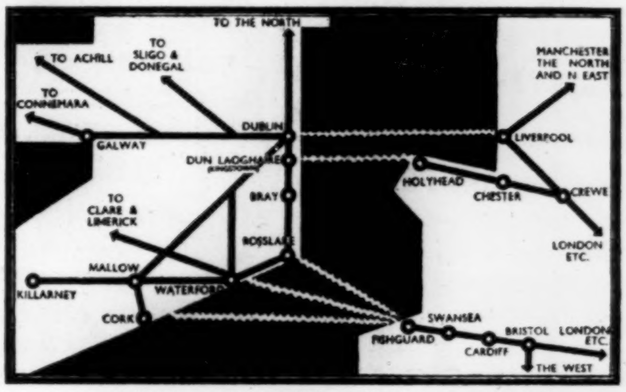

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to the value of mine and counter-mine. Expertise they believed would be bad for discipline; and as saluters of Sam Brownes, brass-hats, and other millinery the tunnellers probably always left something to be desired. Nevertheless, though they had once protested against any form of "drill" as being outside their contract, these experts from the mines of the Empire put up a fine show as infantrymen when in the scratch rally before Amiens in 1918 they exchanged the pick and the drill for the rifle and bayonet. Here then, is the story of the tunnel and its value in modern war, told with a wealth of detail and fortified with graphic accounts of the more important subterranean operations, and of the collective and individual heroism involved therein. The authors assure us that G.H.Q. though slow to learn did learn, and we must hope that the lesson has not been forgotten.

William Randolph Hearst. By MRS. FREMONT OLDER. *Appleton.* 15*s.*

This, unfortunately, is an "authorised" biography, that is to say, it describes Mr. Hearst as he would like to appear. The whitewash is more remarkable in quantity than in quality, for Mrs. Fremont Older has used a style as verbose as it is vulgar. Her book describes Mr. Hearst's attacks on Standard Oil corruption, his attempts to keep the United States out of the war, and his political career, but the most interesting chapters are devoted to the splendours of his Welsh castle and Californian palace. No one in the world, it seems, owns so many Gothic chimney pieces. The silver on the table is worth a quarter of a million dollars, and in the middle are two cups worth eight and ten thousand dollars respectively. The gusto with which Mrs. Older dwells on such details has a charm all its own, and so have the letters to Mr. Hearst from his son at school. "I realise that us kids are handicapped by too much money. . . . All of us kids hate society because those kids are sissies . . . etc." If Mr. Hearst had had the letters written by a skilled copy-writer, they could hardly be better; every Little Man in America will feel that in spite of the Gothic chimney pieces, Mr. Hearst brings up his children as good democrats. This book can be recommended to all students of the modern rich.

Uganda. By H. B. THOMAS, O.B.E., and ROBERT SCOTT. *Oxford University Press.* 15*s.*

Although published with the authority of the Government of the Uganda Protectorate, this is not an official publication, and one does not have to read far into the work to recognise that the book has an individuality and a unity that official handbooks never possess. The authors, who are members of the Protectorates Civil Service and have had the assistance of that Service as a whole, have given us all the details to be found in the ordinary reference book, but they have given them with a difference. The history of Uganda from the time of its earliest visitors to the present day is perhaps the best thing in the book, and is one of the few stories of European contact with African cultures of which the intruders have little need of apology. Happily for the native peoples Uganda is not a place where the white man can make his home or endure prolonged residence; and students of anthropology will recognise that from the beginning of our Protectorate there has been as little interference with local life and custom as circumstances have permitted. The notes on the peoples of the Protectorate, and the geography, botany and zoology of the area, which follow the history, are full and admirable, the illustrations are good, and there are many useful maps.

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The Stock Exchange Official Year Book, 1936. Edited by the Secretary of the Share and Loan Department of the Stock Exchange. *Skinner.* 60*s.*

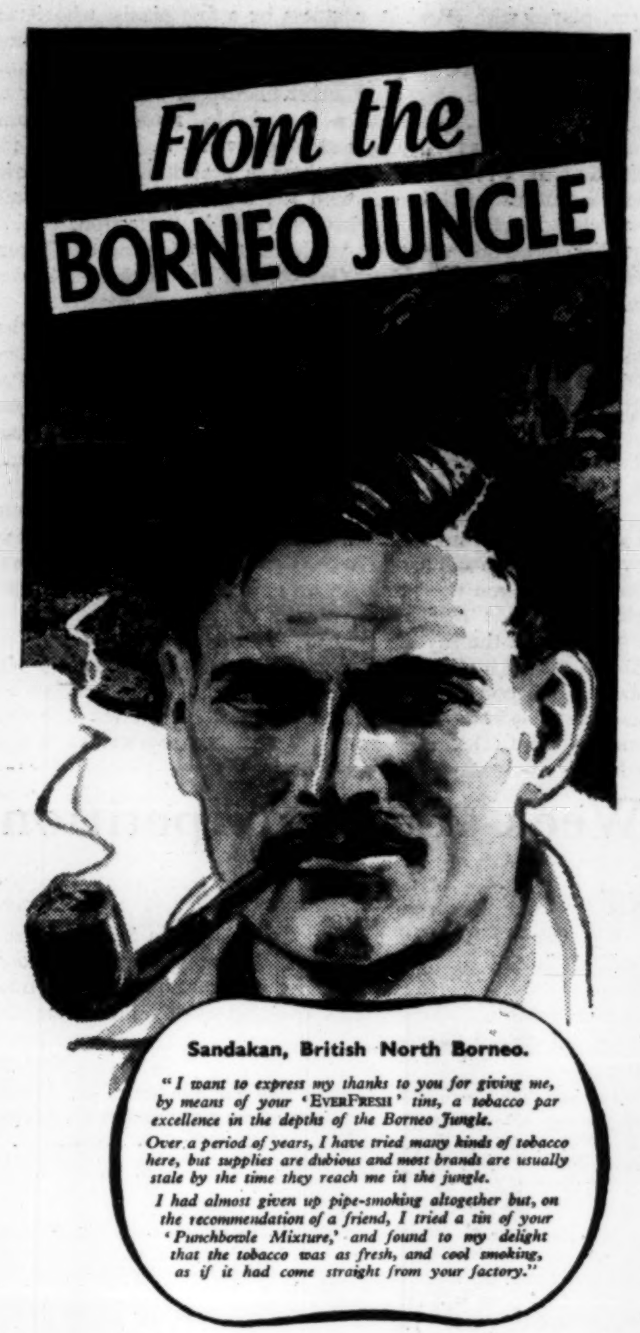
The Fixed Trust Year Book, 1936. Edited by FRANCIS LEWCOCK. *Spottiswoode, Ballantyne.* 10*s.*

Particulars of almost four hundred securities additional to last year's issue are given in the 1936 Edition of *The Stock Exchange Official Year Book*, which now runs to only a dozen pages short of three thousand five hundred. The volume is divided into four sections; the first, containing the comprehensive index, gives the names of office bearers and members of the London, and associated, Stock Exchanges. Special chapters on British, Foreign, Dominion, Colonial and Municipal Finance and on Company Law in 1935 form a separate part. The bulk of the book is devoted to the third section which gives full particulars of securities and companies grouped appropriately. The last contains general financial information, statistics and forms. The compilers of many reference books would do well to examine this useful volume. The print is excellent and, despite the size of the book, the binding is adequate.

It is only five years ago—early in 1931—that there appeared in London the first Fixed Trust. To-day it is estimated that close on a quarter of a million people have invested more than £50 millions in these securities. *The Fixed Trust Year Book* makes its appearance for the first time to supply information in an accessible form to bankers, brokers and investors. The first part is the Editor's own and is almost entirely explanatory of the machinery which goes to make a Fixed Trust. Part two gives particulars of the various Trusts and management companies, summarising the Trust deeds and showing how the prices of units are made. Proofs of this last part only have been submitted to the various companies concerned. This is a useful reference book and is recommended to those people who invest in Fixed Trust securities.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

IT is pleasant, on what one hopes is the eve of summer, to be saluted once again by Honegger's *Pastorale d'été*. This quiet and charming little work has stood the test of some thirteen years. It has none of the forbidding qualities of its composer's later work; its mood is that of Delius's *In a Summer Garden* and Bax's *Summer Music* (unfortunately not yet recorded)—a mood which is apt to get the best out of composers who yield to it. This recording, by the Grand Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the composer (Parlophone E11296) is satisfactory, and would make a good present for your week-end host. A more substantial and expensive one would be the entire first act of *Die Walküre*, sung by Lotte Lehmann, Lauritz Melchior and Emmanuel List, with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Bruno Walter (H.M.V. DB2636–43). The music is, as far as I could judge from memory, entirely uncut—an enormous advantage, particularly in an act which is singularly free from any kind of padding. The ensemble is, as one would expect, superb, and the records are without the usual faults of operatic recording, though one notes an occasional slight echo round the voices. The transition from Wagner to the *New World Symphony* of Dvorák is easily made—too easily, one feels, listening to the pretentious and reminiscential last movement, with its pocket Venusberg. But, though it is hackneyed enough, Heaven knows, the work as a whole wears well. It falls below the level of the 4th Symphony, as I suggested in reviewing the records of the latter, two months ago; but the elegiac *Largo* has a beauty which never fades—the beauty of a distant, level horizon under a windless sunset. The performance, by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski, is most exciting and rhetorical, though I could wish that the conductor had not underlined every emotional point quite so heavily. The recording is brilliant (H.M.V. DB2543–47). Now for a work which I want particularly to recommend. This is the *Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis*, by Vaughan-Williams, played by the Boyd Neel String Orchestra (Decca K815–6). It is difficult music to describe; this is the Vaughan-Williams of the oratorio, *Sancta Civitas*, though here greater succinctness and compression result in a better work. Either you will be bored to death by it, or you will find it transportingly beautiful. Personally, I find



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CVS—13

its rich polyphony—the curiously "stained glass" effect of elaborately divided strings—entirely satisfying. Equally delightful, but how differently, is Walton's *Façade Suite*, which has had to wait a long time for recording. Here, suddenly, are two versions, one by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under the composer (H.M.V. C2836–7), the other by Miss Edith Sitwell, reciting the poems for which the music was originally composed, to the accompaniment of a small ensemble under Constant Lambert (Decca T124–5). This is the best modern example of musical wit: the long noses which it makes at the valse, the yodelling song, the jazz tune, the tango, and so on, have grace as well as pertinence; and the tunes are as delicious as a Wall's ice. I much prefer the fuller orchestral version, minus the speaking voice, which seems to me embarrassing to listen to and merely hampering to the music itself, which speaks quite plainly enough without the assistance of words. One cannot listen to both at once, anyhow, whatever theoreticians may say. Apart from these considerations, there is nothing to choose between the two recordings. "Light" orchestral makeweights this month include the overture to Johann Strauss's *The Bat*, played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Alois Melichar (Decca CA8228), and Saint-Saëns' *Marche Héroique*, played by the Orchestre Symphonique of Paris conducted by F. Ruhlmann (Col. DX728). The recording of the former masterpiece avoids stridency and vulgarity. Those who like marches will find the Saint-Saëns quite a good one; it avoids the more unpleasing features usually inseparable from marches, but it is neither stirring nor original.

There are three Mozart recordings this month. One is the *Quartet in A* (*K*464), played by the Roth String Quartet (Col. LX476–9). This is a wonderfully rich and mature work, full of characteristic subtleties, especially in the long, elaborate variations of the *Andante*. The performance is admirable. Another quartet, in *D* (*K*799), played by the Prisca String Quartet (Decca DE7056–9), is equally lovely, and the records are quite good at the price, though the Budapest Quartet rendering, made some time ago, remains preferable, if a little more expensive. The *Rondo in A* (*K*386), played by Eileen Joyce and orchestra conducted by Clarence Raybould (Parlophone E11292), is a little gem, played with exquisite neatness by a fine pianist whose taste and artistry deserve wider recognition. Is it too much to hope that she will soon be permitted to give us Busoni's *Indian Fantasie*, which I know she plays? Another pianist, of whom we hear too little, Erdmann, has made a remarkable record of Brahms' *Intermezzo, Op.* 117, *No.* 3 and Beethoven's *Bagatelle, Op.* 126, *No.* 6 (Parl. E11295). The Brahms is beautiful, the Beethoven both beautiful and strange, with the oddity of a great master's very late work. The playing of both is perfection. So, in another, more obtrusive way, is Horowitz's rendering of Chopin's *Mazurka in C sharp minor, Op.* 50, and the *Studies in C sharp minor and G flat, Op.* 10 (H.M.V. DB2788).

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at 11 Grape Street is the very best of its kind. A monthly critique is issued free to all customers. It is refreshing in its frankness as to the merits and faults of all the new records. Would you care for a copy?

EMG
HAND-MADE GRAMOPHONES LTD.
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I have two vocal records to recommend this month. First, and more especially, *Mistress Ford's Aria* from Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, sung by Lotte Lehmann with orchestra (Parl. RO20303). This is delicate, pretty music of the *recitativo espressivo* type. Liszt's *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein*, sung by Richard Tauber with orchestra (Parl. RO20302), wallows rather; but it is a beautiful song, all the same.

I see I have left myself little room for dance records this month. I could not find many worth mentioning. *Cling to Me*, played by Ted Fio Rito and band (Decca F5909) reminded me of blowing bubbles. If you want to know why, just listen to it; it is quite pleasant. So is *Hypnotized*, played by the same band (Decca F5892); and the rhythm is good. *Promenade* and *Double Check Stomp*, played by Claude Bampton and his Bandits (Decca F5891) should be good for dancing. *Alone* has a certain melancholy charm. The best version seemed to me that of Dick Robertson and his band (Decca F5900). EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 320

Set by Ivor Brown

We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best lines Written in Rapture before a Block of those Modern Luxury Flats which are bringing Splendour to the Suburb. The raptures may be qualified and the lines must not exceed twenty.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, May 8th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 318

Set by Norman Collins

Now that a movement is afoot to popularise the museums and art galleries we offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best slogans of not more than a dozen words apiece, in the manner of any of our well-known advertisers, for any six of the following: The British Museum, the British Museum (Natural History Section), the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Geological Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, the Science Museum, the Wallace Collection, the Royal United Service Institution, the Keats Memorial House, the National Gallery, the Imperial Institute, the Imperial War Museum, the Tate Gallery, and the London Museum.

Report by Norman Collins

This competition was altogether too much like the real thing: not for nothing have our national advertisers been showing us what they can do with the language. Indeed, reading the entries in the mass was like having to spend a week-end on an Underground platform. Competitor after competitor produced lines that were models of their kind—lines that a child of ten could remember and a grown man not hope to forget. Thus Scholastikos: (National Gallery) "Pictures Put You Right"; Gordon Simpson: "Feeling Your Years? The Geological Museum Makes the Oldest Feel Young"; P. K. Peirson: (British Museum) "Who's Been at the Codex?"; W. Leslie Nichols: (The Keats Memorial House) "Keats Loved It—So Will You"; Thomas Bodkin: (Imperial War Museum) "That's War—That Was";

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Alan Thomas: (Tate Gallery) "Remember the Picture that Hung in Your Parlour? We Have the Original"; Chanticleer: "Oh Mummy! What About the British Museum?" R. Owen produced a brilliant couplet which will (by arrangement with the Trustees) no doubt soon be familiar to all who visit the B.M.:

"Budge Buys Best for Britain,
We Have What Budge has Bought."

Winifred Simmons, following a well-known pattern, achieved: "Mrs. Tate? Not He," which will, no doubt, be plastered over Millbank; and William Bliss contributed the admirable slogan: "Visit the Keats Memorial House and See What Keats Owed to the Nightingale." Little Billie in a typical entry threw away pearls like: (The Geological Museum) "Britain's Underworld Explored"; and Richard Pomfret produced for the British Museum, "It's the Little Daily Doze that Does It"; Olwen Lawton is to be congratulated on: "You Don't Forget to Wash, but Have You Seen the Keats Memorial House?"; and George T. Hay's description of the Victoria and Albert as "The Queen of England's Loitering Places Should Not Pass Unnoticed." More than one competitor thought of "Where's Geo.? Gone to the Geological"—of which a more erudite variant was Thomas Bodkin's "Where's Giorgione? Gone to the National Gallery." To award the prizes was difficult. The First Prize goes to P. J. Terry, the Second Prize to Allan M. Laing, the unevenness of whose entry was atoned for by the inspired badness of the near-pun in his last slogan. Guy Innes deserved more than honourable mention.

FIRST PRIZE

Take the Kiddies to see the Mummies. (British Museum.)
Nervo and Knox for Them, Victoria and Albert for You.
Tête-à-Tête at the Tate.
She thought she could paint, till she went to the National Gallery.
Whatological? Geological—London's safest Museum.
Wallace is Good for You.

P. J. TERRY

SECOND PRIZE

WALLACE COLLECTION:	She thought Harridge's was great till she saw the Wallace Collection!
THE BRITISH MUSEUM:	Two hours to wait! Mine's a Museum!
THE SCIENCE MUSEUM:	Gives you that Schoolboy Complex.
THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM:	Has the little something extra the others haven't got.
THE GEOLOGICAL MUSEUM:	Geology is Good for You!
THE TATE GALLERY:	Petersfield, Hants (but it hasn't the haunting beauty of THE TATE!).

ALLAN M. LAING

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 175.—EL GINKADOR

Halibut Van Dam, known for some reason as El Ginkador, was imprisoned for some years in the penitentiary at Baton Rouge. By the kind offices of the Warden, he was allowed to receive letters and parcels. One day he received a letter containing this cryptic message:

"The key to your release is to be found in an adaptation of Danton's saying: *Courage, and again courage, and courage yet once more.*" Shortly afterwards there arrived a parcel of foodstuffs, and with it, on a slip of paper, the following:

"LORO FKOA WLIF EEEI RUOY NPUG NIDD."

Shortly afterwards El Ginkador escaped.

Can you decode the message which he received?

NOTE.—For those who "shy" at cryptograms and ciphers. The above is (in my view) an easy one. I shall expect at least fifty correct solutions!

PROBLEM 173.—RED AND WHITE

I much regret that, owing to my absence from this country, I did not myself see either the proof of this problem or the issue in which it appeared, and have only this week discovered a printer's error. "60" appeared instead of "20." I can only console those solvers who may have wasted time over the problem with the reflection that it is better to travel hopefully, etc. I will restate the problem here, and will take the opportunity, at the same time, of slightly improving its grammar:

"Here," said Professor Diddleham, "I have a number of red and white balls."

He placed a number of each in each of two bags.

"Now," said the Professor, "I propose to draw, at random, three balls from each bag." He did so. All the balls drawn were white.

"Unlikely, that was," said the Professor. "More unlikely in the case of bag A than of bag B. In fact the respective probabilities—that all three balls drawn are white—are in the ratio of 13 to 48."

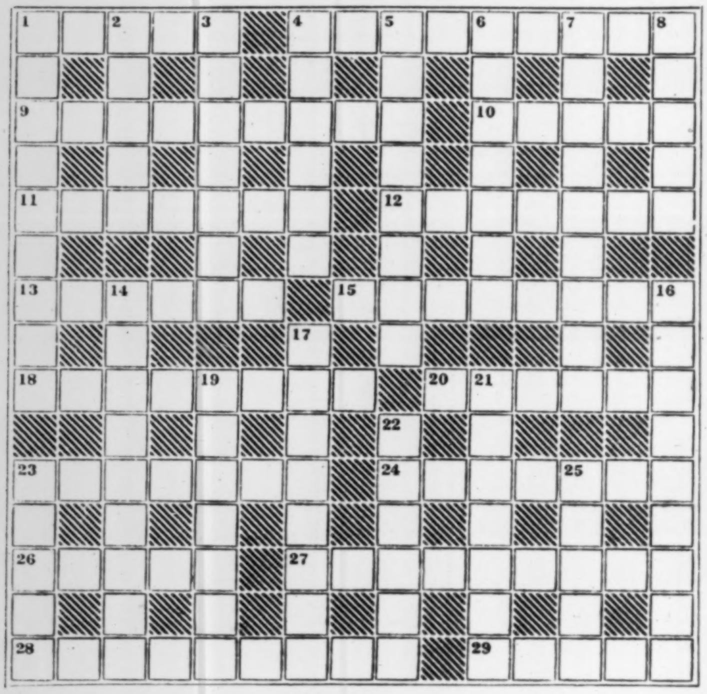
Next, the Professor replaced the three white balls in each bag. He now transferred three balls from bag B to bag A. Then, having well shaken the bags, he again drew three balls from each. Again all the balls drawn were white.

"Astonishing," said the Professor. He made a rapid mental calculation. "And this time the probability that only white balls would be drawn was 20 times as great, in respect of bag B, as it was in respect of bag A."

How many balls are there of each colour?

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 321

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S

The last week's winner is
Mrs. B. Harding, 20, Anglesea Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

ACROSS

1. Fast shipping?
3. Proverbially back-breaking.
9. A most uncavalier person.
10. Five paid out of order.
11. The highest opening for the first class.
12. Universal peace would render him unemployed.
13. You can search them in turn.
15. Flower to be remembered.
18. Conditions are surely not so equal when the dark horse wins.
20. Stringy for the cat.
23. You must get Otto back, Sir.
24. Material for a Soviet dog chain?
26. Waterfall strength.
27. Antithesis of the nightcap.
28. Floor with a roof.
29. A summary result.

DOWN

1. Is he scrum or stand-off?
2. The age of the carriage and pair.
3. He will jump to it when he grows up.
4. Blush on the sheltered side.
5. Crabbed paths.
6. Roman Emperor who died in Britain.
7. Made up again.
8. A sort of gum boot of a bird.
14. Keeps one from missing one's top gear.
16. It would make a suitable bouquet for a departing guest.
17. 1 of 1 across.
19. Long - suffering, but we hope not suffering long.
21. Though Diana's confused, she's in the right in short.
22. A black day for Robinson Crusoe.
23. How to get healthy and strong again?
25. A former statute in precise form.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

B	R	O	S	E	■	A	F	T	E	R	N	O	O	N
R	■	P	■	N	■	S	■	E	■	E	■	U	■	A
O	V	E	R	T	A	K	E	N	■	C	I	T	E	D
A	■	R	■	O	■	I	■	T	■	R	■	O	■	I
D	E	A	D	M	E	N	■	P	R	O	F	F	E	R
B	■	■	■	B	■	G	■	O	■	S	■	H	■	■
E	X	P	O	S	E	■	A	L	L	S	F	A	I	R
A	■	E	■	■	■	I	■	E	■	■	■	N	■	E
N	E	A	T	H	E	R	D	■	L	A	P	D	O	G
■	■	S	■	A	■	O	■	O	■	N	■	■	■	I
L	A	T	E	R	A	N	■	B	L	O	S	S	O	M
O	■	I	■	V	■	W	■	O	■	I	■	P	■	E
S	O	C	L	E	■	A	L	L	I	N	V	A	I	N
E	■	K	■	S	■	R	■	U	■	T	■	I	■	T
R	O	S	E	T	R	E	E	S	■	S	A	N	D	S

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH.	**The Dominant Sex.**	Wed., Sat.
COLISEUM.	**"Twenty to One."**	Wed. & Sat.
DUCHESS.	**Night Must Fall.**	Thurs. & Sat.
GARRICK.	**Two Mrs. Carrolls.**	Tues., Sat.
GLOBE.	**"Call It a Day."**	Wed. & Thurs.
HIPPODROME.	**Please Teacher !**	Th., Sat.
MERCURY.	**Murder in the Cathedral.**	F., S.
PHOENIX.	**"To-night at 8.30."**	Tues., Th.
PLAYHOUSE.	**The Shadow.**	Tues. & Thur.
ST. JAMES'.	**'Pride & Prejudice.'**	W., Th., S.
ST. MARTIN'S.	**Great Experiment.**	Tu., Fri.
SAVOY.	**Lady Precious Stream.**	M., Th., S.
SHAFTESBURY.	**"Promise."**	Wed. & Sat.
WESTMINSTER.	**Ah Wilderness.**	Thurs.
WHITEHALL.	**Anthony & Anna.**	W. & S.

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MAY WHITTY ANGELA BADDELEY

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CATHLEEN NESBITT. HUGH MILLER.

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Mats., WEDS. and THURS., 2.30.
FAY COMPTON & OWEN NARES in
"CALL IT A DAY."
By Dodie Smith.

HIPPODROME. Ger. 3272.
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LIVERPOOL **Playhouse.**
Evenings 7.45. Saturday 2.30.
Storm in a Teacup. By James Bridie.

MANCHESTER **Repertory.**
Evenings 7.30.
Boyd's Shop. By St. John Ervine.

NORTHAMPTON **Repertory.**
Evenings 6.30 & 8.50.
Service. By C. L. Anthony.

The Repertory Theatres whose announcements appear above are members of The Association of Repertory Theatres. *For information concerning Theatres belonging to this Association, or qualified to belong to it, apply to the Honorary Secretary, Bache Matthews, 44 Archway Road, London, N.19. ARC 3845.*

APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

THREE ADVENTUROUS JOBS are vacant in BURGESS HILL SCHOOL, N.W.3, a New Progressive Day School opening this May for boys and girls from 7 to 13.

(1) A LADY who can look after a house, cook, and be a generally useful person.

(2) A young LADY-SECRETARY who can also teach something.

The above posts must be filled immediately, and are both resident. Applicants must be liked by children and interested in modern education.

(3) Required in Sept. a young WOMAN TEACHER for general subjects of Junior School standard. Salary scale high, but may not be paid in full while school is small.

Write to the Headmaster, A. K. C. OTTAWAY, 16 Gurney Drive, N.2.

THE JOINT AGENCY FOR WOMEN TEACHERS.
The official agency of the Headmistresses' Association, Association of Assistant Mistresses, Welsh Secondary Schools Association, and the Association of Headmistresses of Recognised Private Schools.
Apply to Miss K. B. Anderson, M.A., Registrar, 29 Gordon Square, W.C.1. Tel.: Museum 06[illegible]6—9.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF HACKNEY
PUBLIC LIBRARIES
APPOINTMENT OF SENIOR MALE ASSISTANT

The Borough Council invite applications for the above-named appointment at a salary of £195, rising by annual increments of £15 to a maximum of £270 per annum.

Candidates must have had practical experience in a public library, and must possess certificates of the Library Association or the University of London School of Librarianship.

The appointment will be subject to one month's notice on either side and to the provisions of the Council's Superannuation Acts.

The selected candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Conditions of appointment, together with a form of application, can be obtained from the undersigned.

Applications endorsed "Senior Male Assistant" must reach the undersigned not later than noon on Monday, the 11th May, 1936.

Canvassing, either directly or indirectly, is prohibited, and will be deemed a disqualification.

R. H. R. TEE,
Town Clerk.

Town Hall, Hackney, E.8.
21st April, 1936.

SECRETARY to Advertising Manager wanted immediately. Box 148, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

SHORTHAND-TYPIST wanted at once to fill temporary vacancy in Publishing Office. Box 154, N.S. and N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

TEMPORARILY, as daily nurse or nursery governess in London, woman 26, untrained, educated, well-read and considerably experienced with babies and small children. Box 151, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

YOUNG Artist (woman), trained teacher, experienced, enthusiast modern methods, wants post in progressive school. Or any other interesting work. Write Box 145, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

DOCTOR, six years qualified, varied experience, hospital, G.P., skin diseases and V.D., literary interests, wishes interesting situation. Box 147, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

VISITING Typist requires occupation (not own machine). Can help with preparation Lectures, Essays, Research. D. MACDERMOTT, 23a Old Gloucester St., Bloomsbury.

TRAINING CENTRES

THE QUEEN'S SECRETARIAL COLLEGE,
67 Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7.
Provides an efficient training in delightful surroundings.
ALL SECRETARIAL SUBJECTS TAUGHT.
Prospectus on application. *Western* 6939

THE BEDFORD PHYSICAL TRAINING COLLEGE, 37 Lansdowne Road, Bedford, Principal: MISS STANSFELD. Students are trained in this College to become teachers of gymnastics. The course of Training extends over 3 years and includes Educational and Medical Gymnastics, Massage, Dancing, Hockey, Lacrosse, Cricket, Tennis, Netball, etc. Fees £165 per annum. For prospectus apply SECRETARY.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

AUSTRALIAN FINANCE AND ITS CRITICS—THE WALL STREET SLUMP REVIEWED—CANADIAN EAGLE PREFERENCE SHARES

IN times past I was one of the most violent critics of Australian finance, but so much has been done to disarm criticism that I was beginning almost to feel proud and jealous of the Commonwealth recovery. What, then, is this whispering about Australian financial trouble? One hears that they have been borrowing too much internally, that they have been importing too much, that their export surplus will not cover their overseas debt service, that their London funds have sharply declined, that money is getting dearer in Australia and that they will be forced to borrow again in London. Now in certain respects the Australian economy has got out of balance, but I see no real cause for alarm. The following table gives the latest available figures of the balance of payments:

	Year ending: June, 1933.	June, 1934.	June, 1935.
		In £ stg.	millions.
Export surplus†	23.7	33.9	15.6
Invisible exports	1.3	0.1	0.1
Interest and dividends payable abroad	29.1	29.0	29.0
Final balance	—4.1	+5.0	—14.3

† Including the net export of gold.

This does not give the whole picture because Australian balances in London have fallen very sharply. At the end of June, 1934, they were estimated at £51.1 millions, at the end of June, 1935, £38.1 millions, at the end of December, 1935, £29 millions, and to-day at £20 to £25 millions. Wool, of course, is the chief factor in the export surplus and in internal purchasing power. A good wool clip inevitably leads to an increase in imports—with a time lag. But wool seasons vary, and it has happened that an increase in imports following a good wool season in 1933/34 coincided with a bad wool year in 1934/35. (Average price of wool in Sydney was 15.8*d.* per lb. in 1933/34 and 9.7*d.* per lb. in 1934/35.) But the current year is a good wool season, so that the balance of payments will be righted if the increase in imports is checked. How can this be achieved?

* * *

Imports can be checked by making money dearer internally or by a curtailment of internal borrowing (i.e., by deflation) or by a further devaluation of the currency. There has already been a rise in the Australian long-term rate of interest. At the end of 1934 the Government floated a loan to yield slightly over 3 per cent. In June, 1935, a loan of £12½ millions to yield £3 8*s.* 6*d.* per cent. was a failure. The market yield on Government stocks is now about 3⅞ per cent. Short-term interest rates have also been moving upward. The trading banks have increased their deposit rates from 1½ per cent. to 2 per cent. as a result of an abortive attempt on the part of the Commonwealth Bank to issue Treasury Bills privately at 1¾ per cent. Making money dearer in Australia is, however, an unpopular move. It suggests the ending of the recovery or the preparation for another slump. The restriction of internal borrowing is, in my opinion, the correct way of curtailing imports. Fortunately the Australian Loan Council has decided not to go beyond the £20 millions already borrowed for public works in the current year, although £31 millions had been authorised. Borrowing afresh in London after the successful, but arduous, conversion of Australian Government loans on the London market to a 3¼ per cent. yield basis, is certainly not advisable. Nor is any further devaluation of the Australian pound in terms of the pound sterling. (Present exchange £125 Australian to £100 sterling.) But the restriction of internal borrowing would enhance the Australian Government's reputation for intelligent financial control—and end this whispering campaign.

* * *

On March 28th I reviewed my past American recommendations and suggested taking some profits in any period of strength. I hope the hint was taken, but if any of my readers are now nursing sick American investments I counsel them to take heart. This should not be the end of the great " bull " market even if the present reaction is followed by a lengthy period of irregularity. Let us analyse the causes of the slump. American common stocks had enjoyed an almost unbroken rise since March, 1935. Some had become overvalued on an earnings basis; some had become stale. The professional traders had long been waiting for an opportunity to " bang " the market, and a curious concatenation of events, foreign and domestic, gave them their chance. First, politics at home. The brokers' hopes that President Roosevelt would be defeated in the elections have now been dashed. It seems that no Republican candidate can stand up against him. Not only is Roosevelt likely to be re-elected but to remain as radical or as socialistic as ever. If his recent speeches are any guide, the " breathing spell " for business is coming to an end. Secondly, politics abroad. Events in Abyssinia and the Rhineland have convinced every American that a European war is certain to break out—sooner rather than later. The market has been fed upon scares: a recent headline, " Geneva votes military sanctions against Mussolini," caused momentary panic. Thirdly, fear of devaluation of the European gold bloc. Every American expects France to devalue the franc after the elections. After devaluation, of course, wholesale repatriation of the European funds temporarily invested in Wall Street. Fourthly, the new Tax Bill. This is expected to hasten the flight of the foreign investor. The House of Representatives has suggested a 10 per cent. tax on the American income of a non-resident foreigner and 15 per cent. on that of a foreign corporation doing no business in the United States. (Incidentally the bill as at present drafted would hit some American holding companies.) Fifthly, over-production and price-cutting in certain sections of domestic industry, for example, light steels. The first quarter earnings of some " light steel " companies will be very disappointing, for example, Republic Steel, Wheeling Steel and American Rolling Mills. Of course, no one expects a national recovery to proceed evenly all along the line, but it is very upsetting to a market to find bad domestic news (particularly if it is political news) falling in with bad foreign news. The professional chart readers who saw the rail and industrial average break through previous resistances levels at 46 and 150 respectively had a sixth cause for anxiety—their own shadow.

* * *

There can be no early resumption of " bull " markets in Wall Street—politics at home and abroad are restraining forces—but in these severe reactions the investor should not be afraid to hold or buy stocks with good earnings yields. For example:—

	High Price 1936.	Present Price.	1935 Earnings.	Current Dividends.	Earnings Yield.	Dividend Yield.
Chrysler	103	93⅝	8.07*	$6	11.32†	6.41
Borg Warner ..	83½	68	5.95	$3	8.75	4.41
Western Union ..	95	75	5.03*	$2	6.71	2.67
Phillips Petroleum.	49⅜	41¾	3.23	$2	7.74	4.79
General Motors ..	71	60¼	3.70*	$2	7.77†	2.82

* First quarter earnings, 1936: $2.65 for Chrysler and $1.17 for General Motors.

† Based on four times first quarter of 1936.

* * *

In making any reference to American stocks I am reminded of Mr. Keynes' dictum that the New York Stock Exchange is a casino and should be treated as such. I have just received a letter from a New York stockbroker who enters the following caveat in his weekly letter to clients: " There is one point that I have made before and I feel I can never repeat it too often, so I want to make it again. That is, no one should at any time assume an opinion as good for more than the moment it is written. An hour, a day, a week or a month later the writer may be forced by changing circumstances to take precisely the opposite view." This broker certainly has no illusions about the nature of the investment business.

* * *

The payment of the arrears of dividend on Mexican Eagle and Canadian Eagle 7 per cent. first preference shares reminds us of their " gilt-edged " character. The latter is the more attractive on a yield basis. Allowing for the dividend arrears as at April 30th, 1936, of 1*s.* 7⅛*d.*, these $3 (Canadian) shares at 15*s.* 3*d.* return a running yield of £6 3*s.* per cent. They are callable on April 30th, 1947, at 12*s.* 7⅛*d.* Allowing for redemption at this date, the shares would yield £5 13*s.* per cent. This is more attractive than the yield on Mexican Eagle 7 per cent. first preference shares of 4 pesos, which at 10*s.* 9*d.* would return a redemption yield of under 5 per cent. Mexican Eagle and Canadian Eagle jointly guarantee their preference share dividends, and as both maintain a strong financial position I regard these preference share yields as attractive.

Company Meeting

IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES

SIR HARRY McGOWAN'S SPEECH

The Ninth Annual General Meeting of Imperial Chemical Industries, Limited, was held on Monday in London.

Sir Harry McGowan, K.B.E., D.C.L., LL.D. (Chairman of the Company), after expressing regret at the great loss suffered through the death of the Marquess of Reading, said: There are only two home matters on which I wish to say a few words. The new Coal Hydrogenation Petrol Plant at Billingham is working satisfactorily, having regard to the magnitude of the enterprise and the unique nature of the process. We have encountered no fundamental difficulty, and we shall, I think, shortly reach the full measure of our original expectation.

The other matter is our acquisition from Messrs. du Pont of their interest in Nobel Chemical Finishes, Ltd. This company carries on a very large paint, varnish and cellulose finish business, one which is expanding rapidly, and is, moreover, of a satisfactorily remunerative nature.

AUSTRALIA

In Australia there has been a marked improvement during 1935, and the prospects for 1936 are encouraging. The Australian company's sales of explosives again show a substantial expansion. In view of the attractive conditions in the gold-mining industry, this increase is expected to continue. Dyestuffs sales again increased satisfactorily, and some progress has been made in the sale of pesticides. Fertilisers also improved a little, but a larger local steel production carries with it a further growth in the manufacture of sulphate of ammonia, which affects the sales of our material. Negotiations for the site for the alkali plant and the accompanying salt-fields have been completed, and work on the salt-fields has been commenced. A period of two years will probably be required for the completion of the whole undertaking.

The results of the company's operations last year were satisfactory, and its prospects for the current year are good. In New Zealand the rate of improvement has been rather less marked, but the Dominion has also benefited from enhanced prices of primary products, and sales of our goods have been well maintained.

CANADA AND SOUTH AFRICA

As regards Canada, economic conditions improved steadily throughout the year, and, although all industries have not participated equally in this recovery, there are indications that it is becoming more evenly distributed. Canadian Industries Limited had a satisfactory year, and, although the margin of profit of a great many products lessened, due to lower selling prices and higher costs of raw materials, resulting in slightly lower profits than those achieved in 1934, sales increased substantially, and the company looks forward to further progress during 1936.

In South Africa, African Explosives and Industries Limited has had another good year. The gold-mining industry continues to expand, new areas are being opened up and, owing to the present price of gold, lower-grade ore can be profitably worked, thus lengthening the life of some of the mines. The outlook is steady and promising.

Production of explosives for the year established a new record, and considerable capital expenditure is being incurred to increase the capacity of the Modderfontein Factory in the Transvaal, in order to keep pace with the growing demands of the mines.

EXPORT MARKETS

Compared with the previous year, the volume of British export trade to overseas markets has shown a general and steady expansion, in which we have participated, and reflects the slow but widespread improvement in world economic conditions. Currency and exchange regulations are still a deterrent to full recovery, but their effect has been to some extent mitigated by various clearing and payment agreements, which, though still hampering free commerical intercourse, do in most cases afford a prospect of shippers of goods being paid for them without indefinite delay.

The satisfactory increase in the volume of our export trade has not been obtained without a vigorous and determined price policy operated mainly through our network of merchant companies abroad.

Various plans and proposals for the extension of our manufacturing interests abroad have been followed up by investigations and actual developments. In Argentina the company which was formed to merge the interests of your own company with those of Messrs. du Pont is consolidating and extending its activities, and in Brazil negotiations are well advanced for the establishment of a similar undertaking. In India our study continues of the problems likely to arise in the manufacture of alkali, and the possibility is being closely examined of the local manufacture of other products on a basis advantageous both to your company and to Indian consumers.

ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

Economic nationalism is still persistent throughout the world, for not only has it sprung from political conditions, but it will remain so long as political conditions continue to be unsatisfactory.

So far as one's vision can pierce the future, there seems little likelihood of any disappearance of this feature. I.C.I. is, therefore, regrettably forced to follow its tendencies by adopting a policy of entering upon the establishment of local factories, wherever the demand in a country is sufficiently large to make the establishment of an enterprise there economically sound. By this policy we combine manufacture on the spot with some share in the remaining import trade. As the local market grows, imports tend to decrease. In consequence, we gradually face a reduction of manufacture at home. While this is to be regretted, no alternative presents itself.

REORGANISATION OF CAPITAL

At the extraordinary general meeting of the company, held on 1st May, 1935, the necessary resolutions were passed for the purpose of putting in force the Board's scheme for the reorganisation of the capital of the company. All the steps proposed lay within the power of the company with the exception of one, and that a step which was entirely consequential upon the adoption of the proposals, namely, the reduction of the amount of the former deferred capital. Under the Companies Act that step required the sanction of the Court; almost twelve months have now gone and still I cannot tell you the final result. In the Court of First Instance, Mr. Justice Eve, after seven days' hearing, allowed the company's petition and confirmed the reduction of the nominal issued capital of the company by £5,434,000.

The deferred shareholders who had opposed the scheme were required to pay their own costs. Notice of Appeal was given, and the Court of Appeal, after four days' hearing, dismissed that Appeal with costs against the appellant deferred shareholders. Leave to appeal to the House of Lords was refused by the Court of Appeal, but application for that leave is now being made to the House of Lords.

PROFITS AND DIVIDENDS

The company's net profits show a further moderate increase of £357,000. This net income is arrived at after providing £1,000,000 for the Central Obsolescence and Depreciation Fund and the necessary amount for the company's income tax. The board have again appropriated £1,000,000 to the general reserve, and have also this year put aside £150,000 for a Workers' Pension Fund.

In considering the dividend policy, the board found themselves in a difficult position, because the decisions in the Supreme Court in regard to the company's scheme for the reorganisation of capital could not yet be taken as final. After consultation with counsel, and on their advice, the Board recommend a final dividend of 5½ per cent. on the ordinary stock, which represents the former ordinary shares, payable on the 1st June, 1936. With the 2½ per cent. interim dividend already paid the dividend for the year thereon will be 8 per cent. The Board also recommend a dividend of 4 per cent. on that ordinary stock which represents the former deferred shares.

THE COMPANY'S POLICY

From a perusal of our annual report, with its record of growth in the volume of business, of capital extensions, etc., a larger increase in the company's profits might perhaps have been expected by shareholders. I must remind you, however, of the company's policy. We endeavour to combine every possible extension of our activities with a consistent care of the prices we charge for our products.

As a quasi national organisation serving practically all the major industries of the country, we endeavour to preserve the shareholders' capital and to make it reasonably remunerative; to provide our customers with the finest products and give them also the most attentive service; to keep in the forefront of technical progress by active and original research; to recruit the finest material possible for employees of all grades, and to enlist their loyalty and interest by giving our workers and staff the best working conditions, as well as by caring for their physical and mental needs—the co-operation of loyal workers is one of the most valuable assets the company possesses—and to keep our prices as low as possible, consistent with the foregoing principles. Low prices in the long run

(*Continued on page* 686)